

# COUNTRY LIFE

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SPEAIGHT,

LADY MILBANKE.

157, New Bond Street, W.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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### EDITORIAL NOTICE.

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## WATER-FINDING.

NO more curious correspondence has been printed for some time than that which has been going on in regard to the water-finder or dowser. As our own columns have testified, there are many people, whose sincerity is not open to question, who devoutly believe in the miraculous gift claimed by these men; but then there are others who simply make of the pretensions of the dowser a matter for scoff and jest. They say that there is not a single superstition which has not had its earnest believers, and which might not be accepted if the evidence for water-finding were deemed sufficient. Of the hold that superstition still retains on the minds of country people there can be no doubt whatever. Only a few years ago, within forty miles of Whitechapel Church, there was a case of witch-finding, which ended in the death of a perfectly harmless old woman, and there are hundreds of people living in our villages and hamlets to-day who, if they are robbed, or if they lose anything, imagine that the most certain remedy is to apply to the "wise man" or the "wise woman" of the district. We have known them to make long journeys for the purpose. In cases of disease especially the miraculous powers they attribute to the persons and to the simples employed are astounding. The progress towards enlightenment may go on surely, but it goes on very, very slowly. Beliefs in ghosts, for instance, never get exterminated, although they change very much in form, so that the apparition of half a century ago now gives place to the invisible "spook." Again, in regard to luck people are still as superstitious as they were in the days of Aristophanes. We have seen a peasant woman turn back because when starting on her journey a hare crossed her path, or rather it jumped out of the hedge and went back again. Should three crows hover near the roof that covers a sick person, his doom is thought to be sealed, for coming events cast their shadows before in the minds of all creatures that live on carrion. But the magpie, the starling, and many other merely insectivorous and graminivorous birds have superstitions attached to them.

If there were such a power in existence as the dowser claims, it would be of great service to know exactly where it resides. Usually in the pursuit of his avocation he, like the old diviner, uses a rod; but then every dowser does not use a rod, and all rods are not of the same material. One water-finder fancies a strip of willow, and vows that in it lies the magic; another takes a twig of hazel, and achieves the same result, while various other kinds of trees have been tried. This would in itself dispose of any supposition that sympathy exists between underground water and any particular tree. When the twig bends it is

not its own fibre that is influenced, but the hand of him who carries it. Of course, there are many phenomena of a very similar kind claimed by spiritualists. Thirty or forty years ago table-turning was a favourite drawing-room pursuit, and there were many eminent men who thought that the facts were indisputable, though the explanation of them had not yet been found. Again, the thought-reader once had his vogue, and many of us remember how Mr. Stuart Cumberland, in the ecstasy of his enthusiasm, would drag some unfortunate victim round and round a room till by sympathy he was able to place his finger on the hidden ring or thimble. All this seemed to be genuine and right at the time, but, somehow, the fashion passed away, and people ceased to believe it. We would, however, be inclined to classify the downward inclination of the rod as belonging to this type of phenomena. Many of the operators are absolutely honest, but unconsciously they do things that they wot not of, and hence the result. No man of science has ever yet put forward a serious contention that there is any influence in a spring of underground water that would cause movement in a twig held above the surface. It is as absurd to believe in it as it was to believe that Anthony Mesmer, and those who came after him, could, by what they called will-power, influence people with whom they had no material contact. A commission of French *savants* sat on this very question about the time of the Revolution, and they came to the conclusion, which time has confirmed, that there was no evidence to show that one will could act upon another without physical contact, though of course people who have once been hypnotised become the slaves of habit, and hypnotism has been reduced to a natural condition which can be brought about under normal circumstances. Any sane man or woman can hypnotise himself or herself. But our contention was that, if it were proved that mind could not act upon mind at a distance, or if, what comes to the same thing, no good evidence to the contrary could be produced, then it is still more remarkable that water could act upon wood.

If there be no virtue in the rod, then it must be, if it exists at all, in the person who wields it; but several of the correspondents who have written on the subject deride any such contention. They say that a smattering of geology or of scientific knowledge of any kind would be sufficient to stamp this as a hallucination. Yet who can put limits to the operation of instinct. Man has descended from a hunting animal, and he is still capable of developing many instincts belonging to his hairy ancestors. We ourselves once knew a man who could follow the scent of a fox with as much fidelity as the best hound in the pack, and could even tell if Reynard had crossed a field some time after the event. He was a labouring man, and demonstrated his capacity in the most practical manner two or three times a week by actually following the hounds. Here the power of scent was developed almost to the point of the miraculous; and this is no isolated case, because individuals every now and then are found with some capacity or other that is quite abnormal. It is just within the range of possibility that water-finding may be one of these natural gifts, only plain common-sense would say that water in England is not so scarce or so difficult to find that even a horse or cow need go long in want of it. In the Sahara Desert it might be very different, and we could well understand that a camel or a dromedary should by an instinct, which in reality is only the exercise of a finer sense, be able to feel when one of the greatest necessities of its life—water—was in the neighbourhood. But we much misdoubt the dowser when he claims a kindred faculty. Undoubtedly, in support of his case, he could bring many examples of water having been found by his agency; but then in this country and the climate of Great Britain the spots are very few indeed in which water cannot be found if you go deep enough. Thus we come to a very common-sense conclusion. If the water be difficult to find, the dowser's success is due to the circumstance that he will encourage those who want it to go on boring. If it be comparatively near the surface, there is just a possible chance that the remnant of some sense which he has inherited from the wild beast may enable him to know that it is near. The age of miracles, like that of chivalry, is gone, and short work may be made of those who, on their own part, or on the part of their friends, make any pretence to supernatural gifts in the matter. To say anything else would be to revert to the gross superstitions of the national childhood, when men and women went about with wondering eyes like children and found inexplicable mystery in the long roar of the thunder and the flash of the lightning.

## Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of Lady Milbanke. Lady Milbanke is the daughter of Colonel the Hon. Charles Frederick Crichton of the Irish Guards, and was married in 1900 to Sir John Peniston Milbanke of Earls House, Chichester, Sussex.



THERE is plenty of room for grave apprehension in the rumour, which we have reason to believe well founded, that Germany is taking steps towards establishing peace in the Far East, because the suggested means of carrying out her intention are dangerous in the extreme. The plan is to offer Japan terms, and to buttress this suggestion by an alliance between Russia, Germany, and France. The telegram to this effect came from St. Petersburg on Tuesday, but the proposal had been known and discussed in London several days before. After her victorious struggle with China, Japan had some experience of this kind of thing, and, probably, would not tamely allow that piece of history to repeat itself. It may be true that she would be powerless against such a European combination if she stood alone, but then she has an ally who could not well forsake her under such circumstances. The German statesmen may have worked it all out, and be prepared to take the consequences. Indeed, it is just possible that they have calculated on them. In that case every Government in the world will be called upon to act with combined prudence and determination, or otherwise universal war might be the outcome.

Now that Port Arthur has been surrendered, public estimation of its commander appears to be rather on the wane. Certain things have been done that would win no honour or respect for a commander in this country. For example, our Nelsons and Collingwoods would never have been so pusillanimous as to blow up their ships in a harbour. They would at all hazards have steamed out into the open sea and won their way through the hostile fleet, or died in the attempt. So also with General Stoessel himself it was felt, considering the long list of guns, ammunition, food, and material generally that the Japs were able to capture, that determined men might have made a much longer fight of it. Again, the scenes described by the various correspondents of the papers seem to show that both soldiers and sailors got out of hand. The defence of Port Arthur does not promise to become a brilliant page in the history of Russia.

In the general criticism of Russia's difficulty in maintaining her army in Manchuria by means of the single line of rail at her disposal, it seems as if the really important point, as it might conceivably affect ourselves, is commonly overlooked. The wonder is, not that there should be a difficulty in the maintenance of such an army, but that its difficulty should be so far overcome; and its primary importance to us consists in the lesson it conveys of the danger menacing our North-West Indian frontier in the event of our ever finding Russia our active foe. If she can at all maintain, with a single line, such an army as is now opposing the Japanese advance, what limit can we reasonably place on the force that she could bring and could adequately supply by the double line that now practically touches our Indian frontier? Among the obvious lessons of the present war, this, which is of no small importance to us, is often quite unnoticed.

Those who have been prophesying a return of national prosperity will not find much to confirm their optimism in the labour memoranda issued for December by the Board of Trade. There was a slight improvement in the coal, iron, steel, ship-building, and worsted trades, but on the whole we are told that employment was dull, and rather worse than it was a month ago. The proportion of unemployed at the end of December was 7.6, as compared with 6.7 per cent. at the end of December, 1903. Of course, if business had begun to improve, these figures might still be what they are, because it is some time before a renewal of activity begins to affect the statistics of employment, which are of necessity considerably behindhand; and, again, Christmas is a bad time to look for revivals, since contracts and arrangements are in many cases made out to commence with the opening of the year. It will, however, be extremely interesting to await future developments.

The prospect of the completion of the Panama Canal is leading to a certain amount of natural activity among the other Powers with whom we share the control of the South Pacific and its islands. In the Marshall group the Germans are actively setting about the consolidation of their position in these waters, the steps recently taken to put an end to the trading visits of Australian steamers being merely a small item in a larger scheme. In the New Hebrides, which are at present under the joint control of France and ourselves, there is undoubtedly a strong pressure of local opinion upon the French authorities to secure predominant rights, though, quite apart from strategic considerations, Australian settlers have large interests in the group. International control of Pacific islands has already proved so unsatisfactory and dangerous, as in the case of Samoa, that it is obviously very desirable that the status of the New Hebrides should be settled by the British and French Governments on a permanent and satisfactory basis before the amount of friction already existing locally is inevitably increased as the opening of the new ocean route to Australasia grows nearer.

Opponents in every country of civic maladministration and corruption will watch with interest the progress of the renewed attack on "Tammany Hall" now being led in New York by District-Attorney Jerome. "Tammany" maintains itself in power and profit by enabling its supporters to defy the law in the conduct, or misconduct, of their businesses, and the question is simply whether Mr. Jerome is able to discredit it in the eyes of its henchmen by proving that the law can actually be enforced. Should he succeed, the standing reproach of American civic government will doubtless be removed for a year or two from New York; but, on other occasions before this, defeated Tammany has shown a marvellous recuperative force. American public sentiment does not, on the whole, care whether there is corruption or not in the administration of the big cities, so long as their public works of one kind and another are conducted with efficiency and prompt enterprise. We in this country, on the other hand, are intolerant of corruption, but often slow both to start and to finish. There is no natural incompatibility between civic honesty and civic energy, and it is unfortunate for both countries that they rarely see them in conjunction.

#### THE TREASURE.

On the highway, idly walking,  
Idly thinking, idly talking,  
Once you cast a treasure down.  
In the dust it lay unheeded,  
Lay unsought for, lay unneeded,  
Till a day and night had flown.  
Came a pilgrim seeking sadly,  
Seeking hopeless, seeking madly,  
Found the treasure, raised it, shrined it  
In his heart till death his own. K. M. G.

Sir Edward Grey, who, in addition to being one of the most promising statesmen of to-day, is also an accomplished country gentleman, made an excellent speech to a Northumbrian farmers' club last week. It was on the old theme of agricultural depression, and the text might very well have been the proverb that "Providence always helps those who help themselves." He illustrated this exhortation by reference to what has taken place in Denmark, where the farmers, by organisation and intelligent effort, have raised themselves out of depression into a high state of prosperity. Sir Edward did not recommend a slavish imitation of their efforts, which could not be very profitably applied in the particular district wherein he spoke, but he tried to infuse into the minds of his fellow-North Countrymen some of that spirit of enterprise and hope and endeavour which our Danish friends have shown. The British husbandman is in a position to say that there is no need to despair.

The Grand Jury at Cambridge Assizes on Saturday are to be congratulated on the vigour and firmness of the presentment they made to Mr. Justice Grantham. They thanked him for "the determination with which you have brought before the country the many and great obstacles thrown in the way of cottage-building in country districts by impracticable and unnecessary bye-laws, and by the arbitrary way in which they are sometimes administered by those in authority." Mr. Long cannot very well afford to neglect so striking a warning, especially as it embodies the opinion of all intelligent students of the situation. Mr. Justice Grantham, in replying, was almost too modest and moderate. He described his work as having only been "an attempt to oppose a local authority when trying to enforce non-existing bye-laws," or illegally interpreting those they had a right to administer. Rumours are afloat that the present Parliament is moribund, so that we scarcely dare to expect that any strong action will be taken at the moment; but when "Amarath to Amarath succeeds," we hope that the new legislative assembly, whatever be its political complexion, will



undertake a reform which, by no controversial ingenuity, can be twisted into a matter of partisanship.

Since last writing, England has had experience of one of those vicissitudes of weather to which our climate accustoms us. After several days of such closeness that it was uncomfortable to wear a great-coat, a keen frost, accompanied by a roaring wind, made its appearance on Saturday, and on Sunday developed into a snowy tempest. The newspapers are full of casualties at sea, and the supply of fish has been considerably shortened at Billingsgate, because the fishing-boats were not able to go out. The storm, however, did no injury to agriculture. Something of the kind was needed. The early-sown wheat was almost too far forward, as are the hedgerow and woodland wild flowers—primroses, violets, anemones, and the like. The frost was a much-needed check to premature vegetation, and probably, too, it has had the effect of destroying many injurious insects and grubs. To them a sudden frost is fatal. If the cold weather comes on gradually, down they go into their inner fortifications; but if a treacherous January sun lures them forth, then the first sudden and sharp frost smites them with a great slaughter.

A great extension of travelling facilities in Spain may be looked for in a few years' time, on the realisation of the scheme for three new railways across the Pyrenees, which has already been agreed upon by a convention, and now awaits ratification by the French Chamber. The insufficiency of the present means of communication is a heavy drawback to commerce, and the thriving province of Catalonia will be immensely benefited by the provision of a direct route, by one of these proposed lines, between Barcelona and Toulouse and Paris. The Ebro Valley and Madrid will reap the advantage of the line intended to run from Oléron to Lucca; while over the third route it is intended to establish a fast passenger service to Algeria by way of Carthage and Oran. Two of these lines will involve a tunnel through the mountains, though the Paris-Barcelona route is intended to be above ground, and the trains, after the change to the Spanish gauge at the frontier station, will be worked electrically.

We hear a great many complaints from different parts of the country about the poor character of the sport that the fox-hunter has enjoyed, or failed to enjoy, and many causes are assigned for it, such as the excessive numbers of the foxes, the unstopped earths, and so on. There is no doubt that all these are factors in the unfortunate result; but perhaps the most effective factor of all is the character of the weather in the present hunting season, so far as it has gone. Few phenomena are more mysterious than those concerned with the scent of foxes; but if there is one point about it on which there is some general agreement, it is that scent is good after a continuance of quiet and steady weather, with a fairly uniform level of the barometer. In contrast with all that, the first part of the winter has been singularly blustery and changeable, and it needs to look no further for an adequate explanation of the poor sport.

The little Kentish village of Hildenborough has set an example that might be advantageously followed by other places of the same kind. It is not denied by anybody qualified to speak on the subject that one strong reason for the rural exodus lies in the dullness of the village. They have got over that at Hildenborough by starting some village theatricals, an experiment that must have been as instructive as it was amusing. Up to a certain point everybody is the better for trying to act. It clarifies the understanding, since no one can deliver a meaning of which he has not an intelligent apprehension, and it evokes a power of sympathy, because to represent a character you must feel with it. But these considerations, no doubt, lay in the background. The main thing is that the villagers have been provided with a pleasant and innocent amusement for the winter nights, and we hope that the inhabitants of many another benighted little place will take a hint from the proceedings.

It is interesting news that a posthumous novel of Lord Beaconsfield's has been found, and that it will be published in *The Times*; but we are much afraid that the result will be disappointing to those who are writing so hysterically about it. Lord Beaconsfield was a great statesman, but an indifferent novelist. Moreover, the literary work done in his early years was by far the best. "Contarini Fleming" was a fine story, but only a derivative from Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister." "Henrietta Temple" is a passable love story, and "Tancred" will ever be interesting, because there Disraeli got in the glamour of the East and the romance of the Hebrew. But the later stories, that he wrote in his hours of leisure as a statesman, owed what little fascination they exercised to the fact that they were more or less a *roman à clef*, like "Endymion," a book that we confess to have found so dull as never to be able to read it. Wherefore, on the principle *ex nihilo nihil fit*, we do not found any great expectations on this literary discovery.

It has become beyond all doubt that the case of the prohibition of British trawlers to ply their business in the Moray Firth constitutes a very real hardship. With the policy of closing this area to all trawling operations, if that could be effected, there would be no fault to find, and it might be a valuable measure for the protection of our food fishes. As international law stands, however, we are able to close it to British trawlers only, and not to those of foreign nations; and that is the present position of the case. For some while after the passing of the Act of 1892, which created this situation, it did not seem that any large grievance existed. Foreign trawlers did appear in the Firth, but not in such numbers as to cause any very loud complaint. The latest accounts, however, are to the effect that their numbers have much increased recently, and a new feature of the case appears, namely, that British trawlers are now sailing under the Norwegian flag, in order to be able to trawl in the Moray Firth at will. Under the Norwegian law no vessel can carry that flag unless her master and chief engineer are of Scandinavian nationality, which is as much as to say that the crews of these vessels, potential source of our naval recruiting, are becoming more Norse than British. So far the Scottish Fishery Board seems indisposed to take any action in the matter; but the time must be near when the hands of the authorities will be forced, if they are unwilling to move of their own accord, and some modification be introduced into the existing law.

#### A FAREWELL.

If you had meant it for only a game,  
You should have told me before I threw.  
Now you are angry because I blame.  
How can I help it? I trusted you.  
Well, let us say you have done no wrong.  
Still, I'll be comrade with you no more;  
Hear no more the waters' song  
Hand in hand on the shell-strewn shore.  
Lean no more on the fountain's edge  
To watch the lazy carp beneath;  
Stray no more by the sweet-briar hedge,  
Pace no more the windy heath.  
Tread no more the October ways,  
Thick with acorn and chestnut husk;  
See no more the sun's last rays  
From the dewy garden's scented dusk.  
Your tears fall now. Will they fall for long?  
If it comes to that, I am sorry too.  
The heart will grieve for a silenced song  
Though song and singer be both untrue.  
Good while it lasted? Two short years  
We were king and queen of a house of clouds.  
Our house is down in a rain of tears,  
Our glad days lie in their misty shrouds.  
Do I hate you now? Ah, little-wise,  
Till the bowl be broken and loosed the cord  
And the pitcher shattered, 'tis love that lies  
Between us two like a lasting sword.

ETHEL CLIFFORD.

Some very important evidence has already been laid before the Commission appointed to enquire into the cause of the failure of the fishing industry on the seaboard of Sutherland and Caithness. Mr. Donald MacLean, Convener of the County to Sutherland and Factor for the Duke of Sutherland, made a very clear statement of the case. He said that altogether about 1,170 fishermen were employed, but that the falling off in the supply of fish had thrown them out of work. From 1887 to 1903 the numbers caught had remained at a standstill. Since then the decrease had become alarming. The men themselves attributed this to trawling. They maintain that the beam of the trawler destroys the spawn not only of the white fish, but of the herrings. Whether this be a true statement or not, it is certainly one to which the fishermen cling with the greatest tenacity, and if the Commission can succeed in clearing up the point to the general satisfaction, it will not have held sittings in vain.

Mr. Adam Couper, who was examined as one having expert knowledge, showed a table to prove that the supply of herrings had fallen off, but what breaks the back of his argument is that at the same time they had increased tremendously at Yarmouth. He set up the explanation that trawling in shallow waters was extremely destructive to fish spawn. Of course it is most desirable that all this information and the opinion behind it should be collected, but the more one looks into the facts, the less one is inclined to accept the explanation usually tendered of the phenomenon. All natural things seem to vary excessively in numbers, and so far we have not sufficient knowledge to speak decidedly as to the cause.



## A MORNING WALK.



Miss H. Campbell.

### THE HAUNT OF WILD DUCK.

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ONE of the most difficult, and at the same time one of the most pleasing, occupations of one who has passed the meridian of life, is to recall some of those sunny hours which flew past in childhood, unregarded at the moment, but leaving the impress of a memory behind them. And of these hours, the happiest in the experience of the present writer were those spent in long solitary wanderings. The house in which he lived stood at some little distance back from a river, and escaping by a little postern gate from the garden, one strolled over a field or two, and there were its long sinuous windings. It was fringed on either side with borders of tall sedges, which gave forth abundance of yellow flowers in spring, and in summer formed a thick growth, through which the water-hens and coots and voles had made passages like the runs made by rabbits in a covert. There was a time, late in autumn or early in winter, when the flags withered by the first frosts seemed to whistle mournfully to every breeze that passed over them. But it was not for long. Far away one could see the blue hills where the clouds gathered

and the rain fell, and the mighty floods came and swept the banks bare. At this particular spot the river was smooth and stagnant; but, if you walked on by a path that was a right of way, though the green grass almost concealed it, you came to a



O. G. Pike.

### THE GREAT TIT.

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O. G. Pike.

### THE BLUE TIT.

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broken mill and a great dam, beyond which the water danced away in streams that rippled and glittered in the sunlight. This was where we used to look for the "sea-bluebird of March," who occasionally could be seen on a bare stump, looking out for minnows, exactly as he is in the photograph; but more often there was a flash of blue wings, a vision of beauty, and we knew that we had seen the kingfisher, though only for a moment. On the banks of the river there was, farther down, a delightful wood. Great oaks and elms hung lovingly over the foaming and dashing water, and cast their shadows on the rocky islets fringed with foam, behind which we knew that the speckled trout lay and waited for whatever the stream might bring him. Curiously enough, it was here, too, that one could most readily

watch the pike, who in the still eddies and backwaters awaited their prey almost motionless except for the gentle screw-like movement of the tail, which, if alarmed, became a sharp motion that sent them off like a streak of lightning. I do not know exactly at what weight a jack properly ceases to be a jack and becomes a pike; but those that could be watched here were small, probably not more than from 2lb. to 3lb. in weight. In the clear pools, too, one could often see the barred and red-finned perch swim so gallantly up with all their colours flying and their sails set, so to speak, for the perch is probably the most handsome fish that inhabits English waters. Here, too, was the haunt of the dipper, that seemed at times almost to float on the water, though nothing could be further removed from the idea of floating than his quick eager flight. When he came to a perch on the rock and sat violently wagging his tail, he looked exactly like a wren grown out of proportion. Most of the birds down in this direction were silent, though there were times of the year when the scream of the sand-pipers was louder than the voice of the water, especially if your steps happened to stray towards the vicinity of their nests. It was a sheltered valley with many sunny and pleasant nooks in it, and the first nests of the season were always to be found there. The missel-thrush built in the clump of thorns, the hedge-sparrow in the dividing hawthorn, and the chaffinch fastened his beautiful home to the lichened bole of the ash tree, and so cunningly adjusted



O. G. Pike.

## THE KINGFISHER.

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to the colour that, but for the "twink, twink, twink" of the alarmed and angry birds, it would have been searched for in vain.

But the sights that one encountered in the woodland were not always of a soothing or pleasant character. The game-keeper at the place was of a very unsentimental character, and in clearing out what he called "varmint" he thought all was as fair as it is in love and war. The idea that you should consider the sufferings of wild creatures of any kind was entirely foreign to him, and his faith in the steel trap was absolute. He set steel traps in the rabbit-holes, and caught hundreds of rabbits with broken legs. If a stray cat happened to get into one, his joy was too great for words, and he had always at his heels a loathsome-looking little terrier dog that was all scars and wounds from his many battles and encounters. Very few dogs care to tackle a cat in a trap; they like better when you spring the trap and they catch the flying cat by the back. But this one did not know what fear or apprehension was, and at a "hist" from his master would march up in the most business-like way and kill anything. In dry ditches, under arches, and in various other places, the keeper was always setting traps, on the chance that some unwary stoat or rat or weasel would come upon his doom. Unfortunate was the beast that did so, for, if he looked at these traps once in three or four weeks, it was as much as he did, and the animal was left to pine and hunger to death. He had also a very great hatred of hawks and owls, and no scruple at all about setting pole-traps for them. A sparrow-hawk in a pole-trap was as pitiable a sight as could be imagined, though, after all, it is doubtful if the creature suffered very great pain, since, after a few violent struggles, it hung head downward, suspended by the leg. The curious thing was that the keeper was very far from being by disposition cruel or barbarous. His dogs all loved him, and so did children; and even the poachers did not dislike him, because, being a man of thew and sinew, he enjoyed thrashing them much more than handing them over to the custody of the law. It was quite pathetic to watch this strong and turbulent character growing old, especially when considerable periods of time came to elapse between the occasions of seeing him. Luckily for him, these poachers grew old at the same rate as he did himself, and, so far as they went, he managed to



T. Moyses.

## BETWEEN BOULDERS OF ROCK.

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keep his supremacy. Always when I think of these poachers I am set dreaming over them. They belonged to the old harmless type, and were not of the same tribe as the mouchers that have arisen since, and are little better than thieves of game. One of this group seemed to me to spend nearly all the sunny hours of life sitting on a fallen tree at one of my favourite corners. He rejoiced in the curious nickname of "Was," and his old mother never addressed him by any other name. He was a ne'er-do-weel of the most pleasing variety, and never did the slightest work that he could avoid, but with a half-smile on his face he would watch me pursuing my solitary amusements there. For some of them he cared nothing. When I ran to gather the early primroses or rejoiced in the first blaze of the kingcups, it was evident that in his mind I was no more than a "bit girlie," but if, as often happened, a hedgehog was discovered, then on feet that never were known to hurry he would drag himself along, and venture on many sage speculations as to whether this or the other "terrier" could open the prickly little monster. In the birds' nests he also had a lively interest, which increased in intensity according to the size of the bird. The little blue eggs of the hedge-sparrow, which came so soon and were so very welcome, he utterly despised, and even those of the throstle and the blackbird were little regarded; but, when it was a question of a moorhen's eggs or of a wood-pigeon's, he was all alive, for "Was" thought no domestic poultry laid eggs that had the flavour of those of wild birds, and woebetide those that he came across. His favourite companion was an old soldier, who also had a significant nickname. He was called "Whiff," and tradition was hard put to it to account for the cognomen. Some said that he had let off a gun only once in his life, and then ran for it, saying "It went off whiff." At all events, he was the most astounding coward that ever walked on the grass; but as everybody knew this, and he knew it also, it became far from a defect, but rather a distinguishing characteristic.

Of "Was" the tales were all of reckless adventure. It was he who, coming to grief on a salmon-poaching expedition, while being ferried across the river, got his feet against one side of the boat, and his back against the other, smashing the frail craft up, and causing both himself and his captors to swim for their lives. But a child of ten could have led "Whiff" anywhere with a piece of string. Only, what he lacked in courage he made up in wit, and escaped from many a dilemma in which mere muscle would have been floored. He had great good fortune in many ways, but in none more than in winning the heart of a certain young lady at the hall, who always saved him at the last pinch. Her affection took the form of teasing the gamekeeper and her father, to whom she would frequently say, "I know that old 'Whiff' is going to a certain spinney to-night," and then she would return to him and say,

"The keepers will be at such and such a place; you had better take another direction," and in this way she sent them on many a wild-goose chase, and enjoyed much silvery laughter at their expense. But she always said that "Whiff" was a poacher in a thousand; and, indeed, he was as careful as a keeper about his calling, and even while snaring game would mend a fence or set up a young sapling that had been blown down. May the turf he loved so well rest lightly on his bones!

The tits, of which we show some very characteristic illustrations, were birds equally of the garden and the woodland. Like other creatures, they were indiscriminately and locally named. The country people did not make any difference between the various sorts, but lumped them together under the general title of ox-eyes,

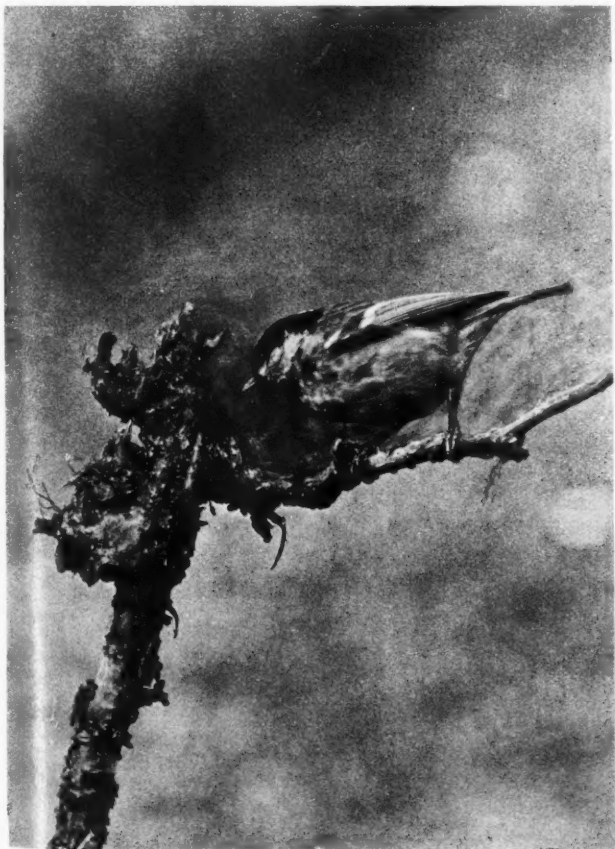
the same name that they gave to a certain daisy. With that love of diminutives which seems to be part and parcel of our nature, they brought it down to "ock-eye." We never saw the word in print, and are simply giving the first spelling that occurs to us. Curiously enough, the people never, in the district alluded to, gave the title of tomtit to any of these, but reserved it for a little brown bird that builds a domed nest on the ground. Of the tits, the little one I like best for its colour. There are many beautiful shades of blue; there is the blue of the deep sea, and the blue of the deep blue sky; there is the blue that comes on the violet what time primroses begin to fade, and there is the little "speedwell's darling blue"; but there is no blue under heaven so exquisitely fine and beautiful as that which comes on the lesser tit's cap when the approach of spring wakens the mating instinct within him. And then the strong, bold, cheery song of the great tit, heard when the April sun is beaming sweetly on meadow and plain, I know no more welcome sound. The other tits were not familiars of my early rambles. By the by, a protest should be made against using titmice as the plural for titmouse. Professor Newton somewhere suggested that the proper plural ought to be the old English one, tit-mousen, and in some parts of East Anglia this is in use at the present moment. However, to return from our digression, the bearded tit was of course not to be found. It had no country exactly suitable to it, and, as far as one can see, has ever been a very local bird in Great Britain. The long-tailed tit even was not so common as he is in the South of England. Once or twice, however, I obtained his beautiful nest, but doing so meant a red-letter day in the calendar. I would like, if space permitted, to contrast now with then, not in point of sentiment or memory, but in point of fact. During the intervening years the population has been gradually dwindling. Houses have fallen, never to be rebuilt, and many a path that used to be kept bare and hard by the patter of childish feet has now resumed the appearance of meadow or arable land. And the birds, it seems to me, have grown more numerous and tamer. Never in the course of my existence did I see such mighty battalions of starlings as manœuvred in the air above me the last time I was there. Never did the yellow-hammer, the blackbirds, and the thrushes await my approach more tamely. It would have been pleasant to note this, but for the fact that accompanying it was an absence of the dear familiar faces, faces that have vanished by the natural action of law, and that have not been replaced and are not likely to be.



O. G. Pike.

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SPARROW-HAWK IN POLE-TRAP.



O. G. Pike.

THE COLE TIT.

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## THE MASQUE OF DEMETER.

"O Proserpina,  
For the flowers now, that frightened thou let'st fall  
From Dis's waggon! daffodils,  
That come before the swallow dares, and take  
The winds of March with beauty."

SHAKESPEARE, "A Winter's Tale," Act IV., Sc. III.

"Not that fair field  
Of Enna where Proserpin gathering flowers,  
Herself a fairer flower by gloomy Dis  
Was gathered, which cost Ceres all that pain  
To seek her through the world."

MILTON, "Paradise Lost," IV., 270-5.

TWO of the very fairest and most famous passages in our two greatest English poets, both inspired by the same lovely Greek legend, which Mr. Bridges has worked up into the beautiful and happy masque, acted last summer by the students of Somerville College at Oxford, as a part of the fête arranged by them on the occasion of the opening of their new library! These lovely Greek legends, why is it that they never seem worn out, that art recurs to them again and yet again, and cannot let them die? Orpheus and Eurydice, Diana and Endymion, Apollo and Daphne, Eros and Psyche, Cephalus and Procris, Prometheus, Hyperion, Tithonus, the painters of all ages, Italian, French, English, have painted them, the poets have sung them. What is the secret? It is that they are in very deed and in themselves immortal. They have a meaning of their own, an inner life, a spirit, a soul, of which they are the fair body. Something there is in Nature, in the nature of this world and of ourselves, which they make visible and palpable. Often, too, this meaning is deep and mystic. Folklore and fairy tales in their popularity and their light, simple grace, they have further something of solemn and sacred, and they ask and excite a faith which we do not attach to fairy tales. This is peculiarly the case with the beautiful legend of Demeter and Persephone. It is the fairy tale of spring and winter, of flower and fruit, of maid and marriage, of mother and daughter, of life and death. The story, like all such stories, is told in Greek mythology in more than one version and with varying details. In its outline it is well known. Demeter, called also Ceres, is Mother Earth, the goddess of the fruits of the soil, more especially of corn. Proserpina, as the Latins named her, Persephone in her still more musical Greek title, called also sometimes simply Cora, or the "girl," is her only daughter, the girl-goddess and the good fairy of the flowers of spring. Heaven and earth are ruled by Zeus, the high god of all; the sea by one of his brothers, Poseidon; the black under-world of death by his other brother, the dark deity Hades or Death. Zeus has his own bright queen, Hera or Juno, but Hades is brideless and dwells in his gloomy world alone. He falls in love

with the fair flower-like girl, and Zeus gives him leave to make her his queen, and recommends him to pounce upon her as she is gathering flowers in the beautiful plain of Enna, in the centre of Sicily. This he does. Yesterday a merry girl romping in the April meadows, to-day the stately queen of one whole realm of the universe—the realm of shadows,

"Pale beyond porch and portal,  
Crowned with calm leaves she stands,  
Who gathers all things mortal  
With cold immortal hands."

Her mother, returning, can only find that she "is not," and roams the world from end to end, day and night. At last the Sun, who sees all, tells her where her daughter is, and that Zeus has sanctioned the theft. Demeter, to coerce Zeus, withdraws her kindly power from the earth, and all its fruits fail, so that men can no more make offering to him. Zeus bids her come to heaven and appear at his bar. Mother Earth refuses, and the sea, Poseidon, sides with her. But Zeus has his other brother, Death, to consider too. Meanwhile Persephone herself, like a true daughter, has become a true wife. She does not wish to leave her dark king and his realm, gloomy though it be, altogether. A compromise is arranged. She is to come back to the upper world and her mother for nine months in the year, and

spend the three "dead" months of winter with her husband. So all ends happily. Demeter removes her ban. Seed-time and harvest, summer and winter shall not fail, or the earth be wasted or heaven defrauded any more.

Such is the theme. For a piece to be played at a college, and a ladies' college, in the open air, in the loggia of their new library on a summer evening in the prime of June—nothing, surely, could be more suited. And nothing, as those who know Mr. Bridges' poetry, and especially his dramatic poetry, would say, could have been better suited to his genius, to the chivalry, the stately grace, the musical harmony, the artistic grouping, the underlying philosophy, which are characteristic of his muse. Other poets recently have handled the same story—Tennyson in a classic idyll, Jean Ingelow in a dancing lyric; but no one has dealt with it so amply and richly as Mr. Bridges. And he showed his judgment in his choice of a form—an Elizabethan masque, with a Greek chorus. It gave him the opportunity for dialogue and discourse, and also for music, for song and dance, for pageant and pomp, all strung together with that lightsome seriousness, that dainty *justesse*, which are his peculiar gift. He was rewarded—rewarded in his *collaborateurs*, in Mr. Hadow's music, in the noble elocution of his Demeter, the versatility of his girl-queen Persephone, the grace of his mermaidens and their *coryphæe*.

Of all this, the one scene, that here presented, can, of course, give only a suggestion. It is to be hoped that Mr. Bridges will publish the whole piece ere long.



DEMETER OF KNIDOS (IN EPHESUS ANTE-ROOM).

and with Mr. Hadow's setting, carried, perhaps, a little further. But if a sample was to be chosen, this was the best—the scene, as it may be styled, of the "Flowers," which, as Shakespeare and Milton, following the lead of Ovid, perceived, is the most significant, as well as the most picturesque, moment of the story.

T. HERBERT WARREN.

# ACT I.

*The Scene is in the Vale of Enna. Enter ATHENA, PERSEPHONE, and ARTEMIS. PERSEPHONE has a basket of flowers.*

ATHENA.  
These then are Enna's flowery fields, and here  
In midmost isle the garden of thy choice.

PERSEPHONE.  
Is not all as I promised? Feel ye not  
Your earth-born ecstasy concentr'd here?  
Tell me, Athena, of thy wisdom, whence  
Cometh this joy of earth, this penetrant  
Palpitant exultation, so unlike  
The balanced calm of high Olympian state?  
Is't in the air, the tinted atmosphere,  
Whose gauzy veil, thrown on the hills, will paint  
Their features changing with the gradual day,  
Rosy or azure, clouded now, and now  
Again a-fire? Or is it that the sun's  
Electric beams—which shot in circling fans  
Whirl all things with them—as they strike the earth  
Excite her yearning heart, till stirr'd beneath  
The rocks and silent plains, she cannot hold  
Her fond desires, but sends them bursting forth  
In scents and colour'd blossoms of the spring? . . .  
Breathes it not in the flowers?

ATH. Fair are the flowers,  
Dear child; and yet to me far lovelier  
Than all their beauty, is thy love for them.  
Whate'er I love, I contemplate my love  
More than the object, and am so rejoiced.  
For life is one, and like a level sea  
Life's flood of joy. Thou wond'rest at the flowers,  
But I would teach thee wonder of thy wonder;  
Would show thee beauty in the desert sand,  
The worth of things unreck'd of, and the truth  
That thy desire and love may spring of evil  
And ugliness, and that earth's ecstasy  
May dwell in darkness also, in sorrow and tears.  
PER. I'd not believe it. Why then should we pluck  
The flowers and not the stalks without the flowers?  
Or do thy stones breathe scent? Would not men laugh  
To see the banner of almighty Zeus  
Adorn'd with ragged roots and straws? Dear Artemis,  
How lovest thou the flowers?

ARTEMIS.  
I'll love them better  
Ever for thy sake, Cora; but for me  
The joy of earth is in the breath of life  
And animal motions; nor are flowery sweets  
Dear as the scent of life. This petal'd cup,  
What is it by the wild fawn's liquid eye  
Eloquent as love-music neath the moon?  
Nay, not a flower in all thy garden here,  
Not were't a thousand-thousandfold enhanc'd  
In every charm, but thou would'st turn from it  
To view the antler'd stag, that in the glade  
With the coy gaze of his majestic fear  
Fac'd thee a moment ere he turn'd to fly.  
PER. But why then hunt and kill what thou so lovest?  
ART. Dost thou not pluck thy flowers?

PER. 'Tis not the same.  
Their victims fly for life: they pant, they scream.  
ART. Were they not mortal, sweet, I could not kill them.  
They kill each other in their lust of life.  
Nay cruelly persecute their blemish'd kin;  
And they that are thus exiled from the herd  
Slink heart-broken to sepulchral solitudes,  
Defenceless and dishonour'd, there to fall  
Prey to the hungry glutton of the cave;  
Or stand in mute pain lingering, till they drop  
In their last lair upon the ancestral bones.  
PER. What is it that offends me?

ATH. 'Tis pity, child;  
The mortal thought that clouds the brow of man  
With dark reserve, and poisoning all delight  
Drives him upon his knees in tearful prayer  
To avert his momentary qualms: till Zeus  
At his reiterated plaint grows wrath,  
And burdens with fresh curse the curse of care.  
And they that haunt with man are apt to take  
Infection of his mind. Thy mighty Mother  
Leans to his tenderness.

PER. How should man, dwelling  
On earth that is so gay, himself be sad?  
Is not earth gay? Look on the sea, the sky,  
The flowers!

ATH. 'Tis sad to him because 'tis gay.  
For whether he consider how the flowers,  
Thy miracles of beauty above praise,  
Are wither'd in the moment of their glory,  
So that of all the mounting summer's wealth  
The show is changed each day, and each day dies,  
Of no more count in Nature's estimate  
Than crowded bubbles of the fighting foam;  
Or whether 'tis the sea, whose azure waves  
Play'd in the same infinity of motion  
Ages ere he beheld it, and will play  
For ages after him,—alike 'tis sad  
To read how beauty dies and he must die.

PER. Were I a man, I would not worship thee,  
Thou cold essential wisdom. If, as thou sayest,  
Thought makes man sorrowful, why help his thought  
To quench enjoyment, who might else, as I,  
Revel among bright things, and feast his sense,  
With beauty well discern'd? Nay, why came ye  
To share my pastime? Ye love not the flowers.

ATH. Indeed I love thee, child, and love thy flowers,—  
Nor less for loving wisely. All emotions,  
Whether of gods or men, all loves and passions,  
Are of two kinds; they're either informed by wisdom,  
To reason obedient,—or they are unconduct'd,  
Flames of the burning life. The brutes of earth  
And PAN their master know these last; the first  
Are seen in me: betwixt the extremes there lie  
Innumerable mixtures all of evil.

PER. Nay, and I guess your purpose with me well.  
I am a child, and ye would train me up  
A pupil in your school. I know ye twain  
Of all the immortals are at one in this,  
Ye wage of cold disdain a bitter feud  
With Aphrodite, and ye fear for me,  
Lest she should draw me to her wanton way.  
Fear not: my part is taken. Hark! I'll tell  
What I have chosen, what mankind shall hold  
Devote and consecrate to me on earth:  
It is the flowers; but only among the flowers  
Those that men love for beauty, scent, or hue,  
Having no other uses: I have found  
Demeter, my good mother, heeds them not.  
She loves vines, olives, orchards, "the rich leas  
Of wheat, rye, barley, vetches, oats, and peas";  
But for the idle flowers she hath little care;  
She will resign them willingly. And think not,  
Thou wise Athena, I shall go unhonour'd,  
Or rank a meaner goddess unto man.  
His spirit setteth beauty before wisdom,  
Pleasures above necessities; and thus  
He ever adores flowers. Nor this I guess  
Where rich men only and superfluous kings  
Around their palaces reform the ground  
To terraces and level lawns, whereon  
Appointed slaves are told, to tend and feed  
Lilies and roses and all rarest plants  
Fetched from all lands; that they, these lordly men,  
'Twixt flaunting avenues and wafted odours  
May pace in indolence. This is their bliss;  
This first they do; and after, it may be,  
Within their garden set their Academe.

But in the poorest villages, around  
The meanest cottage, where no other solace  
Comforts the eye, some simple gaiety  
Of flowers in tended garden is seen; some pinks,  
Tulips or crocuses, that edge the path:  
Where oft at eve the grateful labourer  
Sits in his jasmin'd porch, and takes the sun;  
And even the children, that half-naked go,  
Have posies in their hands, and of themselves  
Will choose a queen in whom to honour spring,  
Dancing before her garlanded with may.  
The cowslip makes them truant, they forget  
The hour of hunger and their homely feast,  
So they may grasp the delicate primrose,  
Sealing their birthright with the touch of beauty,  
With unconsider'd hecatombs assuring  
Their dim sense of immortal mystery.  
Yea, rich and poor, from cradle unto grave,  
All men shall love me and adore my name,  
And heap my everlasting shrine with flowers.

ATH. Thou sayest rightly thou art a child. May Zeus  
Give thee a better province than thy thought.

(Music heard.)

ART. Listen! The nymphs are dancing. Let us go! (They move off.)  
Come, Cora, wilt thou learn a hunting dance?  
I'll teach thee.

PER. Can I learn thy hunter-step  
Without thy bare legs and well-buskin'd feet?

ART. Give me thy hand.

PER. Stay, stay! I have left my flowers.

I follow.

(ATHENA and ARTEMIS go out, PERSEPHONE returning slowly to R.)

They understand not. Now, praise be to Zeus,  
That, though I sprang not from his head, I know  
Something that Pallas knows not.

(*She has come to where her basket lies. In stooping towards it she kneels to pluck a flower; and then comes to sit on a bank facing audience, with her basket on her knees.*)

Thou tiny flower!  
Art thou not wise?  
Who taught thee else, thou frail anemone,  
Thy starry notion, thy wind-wavering motion,  
Thy complex of chaste beauty, unimagined  
Till thou art seen?—And how so wisely, thou,  
Indifferent to the number of thy rays,  
While others are so strict? This six-leaved tulip,—  
He would not risk a seventh for all his worth,—  
He thought to attain unique magnificence  
By sheer simplicity;—a pointed oval  
Bare on a stalk erect: and yet, grown old  
He will his young idea quite abandon,  
In his dishevel'd fury wantoning  
Beyond belief. Some are four-leaved: this poppy  
Will have but four. He like a hurried thief  
Stuffs his rich silks into too small a bag.  
I think he watched a summer butterfly  
Creep out all crumpled from his winter case,  
Trusting the sun to smoothe his tender tissue  
And sleek the velvet of his painted wings:—

And so doth he.—Between such different schemes,  
Such widely varied loveliness, how choose?  
Yet loving all, one should be most beloved,  
Most intimately mine; to mortal men  
My emblem; though I never find in one  
The sum of all distinctions.—Rose were best;  
But she is passion's darling, and unkind  
To handle. Set her by. Choosing for odour,  
The violet were mine. Men call her modest,  
Because she hides, and when in company  
Lacks manner, and the assertive style of worth:—  
While this narcissus here scorns modesty,  
Will stand up what she is, though something prim:  
Her scent, a saturation of one tone,  
Like her plain symmetry, leaves nought to fancy:—  
Whereas this iris,—she outvieh man's  
Excellent artistry; elaboration  
Confounded with simplicity, till none  
Can tell which sprang of which. Could I but find  
A scented iris, I should be content:  
Yet men would call me proud: iris is pride.  
To-day I'll favour thee, sweet violet;  
Thou canst live in my bosom. I'll not wrong thee  
Wearing thee in Olympus.\* . . . Help! help! Ay me!

(\* PERSEPHONE rises to her feet, and amidst a contrivance of some confused darkness PLUTO is seen rushing in from behind. He seizes her, and drags her off backward. Her basket is violently thrown up, and the flowers scattered.)

## WHERE THE FOREST MURMURS.

By FIONA MACLEOD.

IT is when the trees are leafless, or when the last withered leaves rustle in the wintry air, creeping along the bare boughs like tremulous mice, or fluttering from the branches like the tired and starving swallows left behind in the great procession of migration, that the secret of the forest is most likely to be surprised. Mystery is always there. Silence and whispers, still glooms, sudden radiances, the passage of wind and idle airs, all these inhabit the forest at every season. But it is not in their amplitude that great woodlands reveal their secret

life. In the first vernal weeks the wave of green creates a mist or shimmering veil of delicate beauty, through which the missel-thrush calls, and the loud screech of the jay is heard like a savage trumpet-cry. The woods then are full of a virginal beauty. There is intoxication in the light air. The cold azure among the beech-spaces, or where the tall elms sway in the east wind, is like the sea, exquisitely desirable, exquisitely unfamiliar, inhuman, of another world. Then follow the days when the violets creep through the mosses at the base of great oaks, when



E. W. Taylor.

WOOD AND WATER.

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J. M. Whitehead.

A WOODLAND WAY IN WINTER.

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the dust of snowbloom on the blackthorn gives way to the trailing dog-rose, when myriads of bees among the chestnut-blossoms fill the air with a continuous drowsy unrest, when the cushat calls from the heart of the fir, when beyond the green billowy roof of elm and hornbeam, of oak and beech, of sycamore and lime and tardy ash, the mysterious bells of the South fall through leagues of warm air, as the unseen cuckoo sails on the long tides of the wind. Then, in truth, is there magic in the woods. The forest is alive in its divine youth. Every bough is a vast plume of joy: on every branch a sunray falls, or a thrush sways in song, or the gauzy ephemeridæ dance in rising and falling aerial cones. The wind moves with the feet of a fawn, with the wings of a dove, with the passing breath of the white owl at dusk. There is not a spot where is neither fragrance nor beauty nor life. From the tiniest arch of grass and twig the shrewmouse will peep: above the shallowest rain-pool the dragon-fly will hang in miraculous suspense, like one of the faery javelins of Midir which in a moment could be withheld in mid-flight. The squirrel swings from branch to branch: the leveret shakes the dew from the shadowed grass: the rabbits flitter to and fro like brown beams of life: the robin, the chaffinch, the ousel, call through the warm green-glooms: on the bramble-spray and from the fern-garth the yellow-hammer reiterates his gladsome single song: in the cloudless blue fields of the sky the swifts weave a maze of shadow, the rooks rise and fall in giddy ascents and descents like black galleys surmounting impossible waves and sinking into measureless gulfs.

Then the forest wearies of this interminable exuberance, this daily and nightly charm of exultant life. It desires another spell, the enchantment of silence, of dreams. One day the songs cease: the nests are cold: in the lush meadows the hare sleeps, the corncrake calls: by the brook the cattle stand, motionless, or with long tails rhythmically a-swing and ears a-twitch above the moist amber-violet dreamless eyes: the great columns are like phantom-smoke of secret invisible fires: in the green-glooms of the forest a sigh is heard, a troubled and furtive moan is audible in waste incalculable places. The thunder-time is come. Now in the woods may be seen and heard and felt that secret presence which in the spring months hid behind songs and blossom, and later clothed itself in dense veils of green and all the magic of June. Something is now evident, that was not evident: somewhat is entered into the forest. The leaves know it: the bracken knows it: the secret is in every copse, in every thicket, is palpable in every glade, is abroad in every shadow-thridden avenue, is common to the spreading bough and the leaning branch. It is not a rumour;

for that might be the wind stealthily lifting his long wings from glade to glade. It is not a whisper; for that might be the secret passage of unquiet airs, furtive heralds of the unloosening thunder. It is not a sigh; for that might be the breath of branch and bough, of fern-frond and grass, obvious in the great suspense. It is an ineffable communication. It comes along the ways of silence, along the ways of sound; its light feet are on sunrays and on shadows; like dew, one knows not whether it is mysteriously gathered from below or secretly come from on high: simply it is there, above, around, beneath.

But the hush is dispelled at last. The long lances of the rain come slanting through the branches; they break, as against invisible barriers, and fall in a myriad pattering rush. The hoarse mutterings and sudden crashing roar of the thunder possess the whole forest. There are no more privacies, the secrecies are violated. From that moment the woods are renewed, and with the renewal the secret spirit that dwells within them withdraws, is not to be surprised, is become inaudible, indefinitely recedes, is remote, obscure, ineffable, incommunicable. And so, through veils of silence and hot noons and husht warm midnights, the long weeks of July and August go by.

In the woods of September surely the forest-soul may be surprised, will be the thought of many. In that month the sweet incessant business of bird and beast lessens or is at an end. The woodpecker may still tap at the holes of gnarled oaks and chestnuts; the squirrel is more than ever mischievously gay; on frosty mornings, when the gossamer webs are woven across every bramble, and from frond to frond of the bronze-stained bracken, the redbreast tries and retries the poignant new song he has somehow learned since first he flaunted his bright canticles of March and April from the meadow-hedge or the sunned greenness of the beech-covert. But there is a general silence, a present suspense, while the lime yellows, and the birch takes on her pale gold, and oak and sycamore and ash slowly transmute their green multitudes into a new throng clad in russet or dull red or sunset-orange. The forest is full of loveliness: in her dusky ways faint azure mists gather. When the fawn leaps through the fern it is no longer soundlessly: there is a thin dry rustle, as of a dove brushing swiftly from its fastness in an ancient yew. One may pass from covert to covert, from glade to glade, and find the Secret just about to be revealed . . . somewhere beyond the group of birches, beside that oak it may be, just behind that isolated thorn. But it is never quite overtaken. It is as evasive as moonlight in the hollows of waves. When present, it is already gone. When approached, it has the

unhasting but irretrievable withdrawal of the shadow. In October this bewildering evasion is still more obvious, because the continual disclosure is more near and intimate. When, after autumns of rain and wind, or the sudden stealthy advent of nocturnal frosts, a multitude of leaves becomes sere and wan, and then the leaves strew every billow of wind like clots of driven foam, or fall in still wavering flight like flakes of windless snow, then, it is surely then that the great surprise is imminent, that the secret and furtive whisper will become a voice. And yet there is something withheld. In November itself there are days, weeks even, when a rich autumn survives. The oaks and ashes will often keep their red and orange till after St. Luke's Peace: in sheltered parts of the forest even the plane, the sycamore,

and the chestnut will flaunt their thin leopard-spotted yellow bannerets. I remember coming upon a Spanish chestnut in the centre of a group of all but leafless hornbeams. There seemed to be not a leaf missing from that splendid congregation of scarlet and amber and luminous saffron. A few yards on and even the hardy beeches and oaks were denuded of all but a scattered and defeated company of brown or withered stragglers. Why should that single tree have kept its early October loveliness unchanged through those weeks of rain and wind and frosts of midnight and dawn? There was not one of its immediate company but was in desolate ruin, showing the bare nests high among the stark boughs. Through the whole forest the great unloosening had gone. Even the oaks in hollow places which had kept greenness like a continual wave suspended among dull masses of seaweed, had begun to yield to the vanishing call of the last voices of summer. Day by day their scattered tribes, then whole clans, broke up the tents of home and departed on the long mysterious exile. Yet this

sentinel at the Gate of the North stood undaunted, splendid in warrior array. The same instinct that impels the soul from its outward home into the incalculable void moves the leaf with the imperious desire of the grey wind. But as, in human life, there are some who retain a splendid youth far into the failing regions of grey hair and broken years, so in the forest life there are trees which seem able to defy wind and rain and the consuming feet of frost.

The most subtle charm of the woods in November is in those blue spaces which lie at so brief a distance in every avenue of meeting boughs, under every enclosing branch. This azure mist which gathers like still faint smoke has the spell of silent waters, of moonlight, of the pale rose of serene dawns. It has a light

that is its own, as unique as that unnameable flame which burns in the core of the rainbow. The earth breathes it; it is the breath of the fallen leaves, the moss, the tangled fern, the undergrowth, the trees; it is the breath also of the windless grey-blue sky that leans so low. Surely, also, it is the breath of that otherworld of which our songs and legends are so full. It has that mysteriousness, that spell, with which in imagination we endow the noon silences, the eves and dawns of faery twilights.

Still, the silence and the witchery of the forest solitudes in November are of the spell of autumn. The last enchantment of midwinter is not yet come.

It is in "the dead months" that the forest permits the last disguises to fall away. The forest-soul is no longer an incommunicable mys-

tery. It is abroad. It is a communicable dream. In that magnificent nakedness it knows its safety. For the first time it stands like a soul that has mastered all material things and is fearless in face of the immaterial things which are the only life of the spirit.

In these "dead months" of December and January the forest lives its own life. It is not asleep as the poets feign. Sleep has entered into the forest, has made the deep silence its habitation: but the forest itself is awake, mysterious, omnipresent, a creature seen at last in its naked majesty.

One says lightly, there is no green thing left. That, of course, is a mere phrase of relativity. There is always green fern somewhere, even in the garths of tangled yellow-brown bracken. There is always moss somewhere, hidden among the great serpentine roots of the beeches. The ilex will keep its dusty green through the harvest winter: the yew, the cypress, the holly, have no heed of the continual invasion of the winds and rains and snows. On the ash and elm the wood-ivy will hang her spiked leaves. On many

of the oaks the lovely dull green of the mistletoe will droop in graceful clusters, the cream-white berries glistening like innumerable pleiads of pearls. But these are lost in the immense uniformity of desolation. They are accidents, interludes. The wilderness knows them, as the grey wastes of tempestuous seas know a wave here and there that lifts a huge rampart of jade crowned with snow, or the long resiliency of gigantic billows which reveal smooth falling precipices of azure. The waste itself is one vast desolation, the more grey and terrible because in the mass invariable.

To go through those winter-aisles of the forest is to know an elation foreign to the melancholy of November or to the first fall of the leaf. It is not the elation of certain days in February,



J. M. Whitehead.

THROUGH THE FIR-WOOD.

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when the storm-cock tosses his song among the wild reefs of naked bough and branch. It is not the elation of March, when a blueness haunts the myriad unburst buds, and the thrush builds her nest and calls to the South. It is not the elation of April, when the virginal green is like exquisite music of life in miraculous suspense, nor the elation of May, when the wild rose moves in soft flame upon the thickets and the returned magic of the cuckoo is an intoxication, nor the elation of June, when the merle above the honeysuckle and the cushat in the green-glooms fill the hot noons with joy, and when the long fragrant twilights are thrilled with the passion of the nightjar. It has not this rapture nor that delight: but its elation is an ecstasy that is its own. It is then that one understands as one has never understood. It is then that one loves the mystery one has but fugitively divined. Where the forest murmurs there is music: ancient, everlasting. Go to the winter woods: listen there, look, wait, and "the dead months" will give you a subtler secret than any you have yet found in the forest. Then there is always one possible superb fortune. You may see the woods in snow. There is nothing in the world more beautiful than the forest clothed to its very hollows in snow. That is a loveliness to which surely none can be insensitive. It is the still ecstasy of Nature, wherein every spray, every blade of grass, every spire of reed, every intricacy of twig, is clad with radiance, and myriad forms are renewed in continual change as though in the passionate delight of the white Artificer. It is beauty so great and complex that the imagination is stilled into an aching hush. There is the same trouble in the soul as before the starry hosts of a winter night.

## WAYS OF STONECHATS.

TO the average observer of everyday bird-life there are few of our smaller species likely to convey a more definite and lasting impression than the stonechat. Though not exactly common, in so far as being distinctly local in distribution, his is a personality not to be overlooked in the districts he affects. Vivacious, inde-



FACING THE FOE.



ON GUARD.

pendent, and self-assertive, he tirelessly patrols the gorse-clad slope that he has made his own. Now you will see him daintily poised on the spray that yields the best outlook on the world; now he has dived down to snatch some tempting morsel, reappearing in another instant to challenge all and sundry as before. And he is well worth the closer inspection he invites. Glossy black head and legs, well set off by the conspicuous white collar and further touches of white in the dusky wings, underparts of a rich chestnut of varying hues — this is the bridegroom apparel, which is but partially doffed after the autumnal moult.

Joined by his faithful spouse at the first hint of danger, he never fails to justify his name by repeating with almost mechanical regularity and ease that "Whit! chack, chack!" whereof the first note is a sharp drawn whistle, and the rest is that curious metallic sound to be reproduced by striking two small stones together, or even more closely, as I have found, by the flapping of a tight cord against a flagstaff. There is something ludicrously suggestive of an irrepressible Jack-in-the-box about this performance, but the *raison d'être* of all the agitation is serious enough. It is the old, old game of "hot and cold," with important variations in the rules, for here nothing but purposely misleading information is supplied by the disposers of the hidden treasure, and the wary seeker, with full knowledge of this fact, sets himself to follow up the smallest clue betraying its whereabouts. Now, the stonechat is a past-master in the game, and he seems to have such confidence in his powers of laying a false scent that he is ever ready to grapple with a danger which might easily be avoided in the first instance by merely "lying low." It is true that we never see the stonechat feigning injury (that time-honoured and picturesque device of the partridge, nightjar, reed-bunting, and many another bird), and, indeed, such a proceeding would generally fail to attract the desired attention among all the furze bushes; but there are more means than one of attaining the same object.

Sometimes, after having at length succeeded in locating a nest, I have employed my time on subsequent visits in trying to evolve a "system" by closely observing the behaviour of the birds in the light of the knowledge I have gained; but I must



confess that the results are not very encouraging. For one thing, the stonechat never overdoes his part, as by studiously avoiding the actual neighbourhood of the hiding-place; but he will evince exactly the same amount of agonised solicitude whether he is within the danger zone (perching, it may be, immediately above the nest) or at a distance of 100yds. from it. Then, too, the problem is much complicated by the fact that all this time the hen bird will be offering to decoy us by similar actions in a different direction.

The chief place where I have studied the ways of the stonechat for many consecutive years is a plot of badly-drained land on a hillside, some five or six acres in extent, of which barely half is available as rough pasturage, intersected, as it is, by great clumps of gorse. There is ample room here for one pair of these birds, but should a second pair find their way here, it is speedily demonstrated that there is not enough to be shared. This serves to simplify the situation, and I have thus been able to prove to my own satisfaction that the stonechat is genuinely double-brooded. Indeed, during the second week of last August I found in Cornwall some young birds which from their helplessness could not have been more than a day or two out of the nest. Here, in Sussex, the pair of birds I have mentioned are always back at their old quarters before the end of March; and in these quiet, early days, before the stress of the breeding season is yet begun, there is much playful chasing of one another, while both combine to convince any rival suitor that his attentions are unwelcome. On rare occasions, too, the male bird is moved to sing; but he is not much more prone to music than the wagtails. He has, however, a quaint, cheery song, which he prefers to deliver while disporting himself in the air after the fashion of the common whitethroat.

If you would discover the nest with the minimum amount of trouble, it behoves you to be out before breakfast during the first week of April or even the last days of March. While the fervour of building lasts caution is forgotten, and you may easily surprise in a moment the secret so jealously guarded a few days later. This recklessness is exemplified in the following incident. The hen stonechat had picked up a feather or two, when she became conscious of being watched. I was standing, in fact, about 30yds. off, and her mate was vigorously sounding the alarm; in spite of this she presently flew straight to her nest in some bracken, paused there a moment, and then returned with the feathers still in her mouth. She repeated this manœuvre a second time, and, finally, deposited them in the nest without more ado.

As is the case with the great majority of species, the making of the home devolves upon the female, while her lord and master stands on guard. I was once watching through my glasses the busy little worker tugging up bits of moss, with which she was making two journeys per minute to her nest close at hand, when a bullying robin made a wholly unprovoked attack upon her; almost before she was aware of her danger her spouse, appearing from nowhere in particular, had sent the aggressor about his business. On another occasion the cock stonechat almost forgot himself so far as to take a share in the nest-building; coming across a small white feather which happened to be lying on the grass, he picked it up and stood looking round for some moments; but his wife was nowhere to be seen just then, and in the end he put it down again where he had found it.



NEST AND EGGS OF STONECHAT.



ABOUT TO TAKE WING.

The nest is rather deep, and substantially built of moss, tufts of grass, and rootlets, lined with finer bents, horsehairs, and feathers. I have seen materials being gathered from a convenient heap of garbage on some waste ground. The nest is generally admirably concealed in a depression of the ground, scraped out beneath a low-growing gorse bush, and sometimes so placed that a sight of the eggs is quite impossible. Full advantage is taken of the surrounding herbage, this being bent over to aid concealment, and carefully replaced as often as it is disarranged. As regards situation, moreover, I have noticed a marked preference for isolated outlying bushes. Meadow-pipits, which adopt very similar nesting-places, will sometimes return to their choice of the previous year. It is otherwise with the stonechats, and they will build their two nests of the year in very different parts of the field, often, too, dispensing with the shelter of the gorse when once the bracken has begun to grow. The eggs, usually five or six in number, are of a delicate greenish blue, with faint rusty markings towards the larger end. One or two in a clutch are often addled, which must be a blessing in disguise to the hard-worked parents. In just two weeks the eggs are hatched, and it is another full fortnight before the young are out of the nest, usually in the beginning of May.

Both parents are indefatigable in bringing food, but wary to a degree about delivering it while under observation, the note of alarm being uttered by each bird, despite the fact that their bills are laden with a prey that is perhaps struggling to escape. We may observe in passing that human beings (contrary to all the traditions of the nursery) habitually talk with their mouths full, and birds seem to accomplish the feat with surprising ease.

When the education of the young brood is complete they are forthwith treated as strangers, and sent out into the world on their own account. I have seen a youngster, who dared to remain on the scene while the second nest was in process of being made, driven remorselessly off the premises by his vigilant sire. The other family are, as a rule, fledged before the end of June; should the first venture, however, meet

with some mishap in the course of incubation, no time is lost in building another nest, but I am inclined to believe that in such a case no attempt is made to rear a second brood.

In the matter of food the stonechat, as suggested by the bristlers at the base of its bill, is insectivorous; it bears a marked resemblance in feeding to both the fly-catcher and the robin, though it alights on the ground more frequently than the former. Worms, spiders, and moths are included in the diet; in captivity it has shown a great weakness for live cockroaches, and Mr. A. G. Butler, writing in "British Birds with Their Nests and Eggs," remarks on the astonishingly large morsels gulped down by these little birds. A friend of mine found in the stomach of a stonechat a small lizard which had been swallowed whole. Last year I came across one of these birds attacking something large on the ground, which he made great efforts to despatch or carry off before I rescued it from him; it proved to be a very large caterpillar more than 2 in. in length, which I was unable to identify, but which was, perhaps, destined for one mouthful.

Stonechats are very partial to railway banks, where not only comparative sanctuary can be obtained, but also a plentiful supply of many sorts of insects is continually being disturbed for their benefit by passing trains—two advantages appreciated by several other species, notably by the handsome, red-backed shrike.

It has been remarked by more than one observer, that in those districts where the stonechat is common, its close relative the whinchat is for the most part conspicuous by its absence, and *vice versa*; a similar assertion is often made, but with hardly as much foundation, regarding the blackcap and the garden warbler.

The stonechat, or stonechatter, was well known to our early ornithologists. It is, indeed, a very distinctive species, and unlike any other, except the whinchat, from which it is easily to be distinguished by the stripe over the eye of the latter. Gilbert White appears to have been misled by the resemblance between the two, when he included both in his list of "soft-billed birds which, though insect-eaters, stay with us the year round," for the whinchat is strictly migratory, whereas, though many stonechats also depart, plenty remain in the country through the winter. On this South Coast they appear to be just as numerous at that season as in the summer, though they are not always to be found in quite the same places. Some frequent allotments, and many resort to the shore for what they can pick up there, becoming perforce more or less vegetarians. The familiar "chacking" is seldom heard in midwinter.

In securing photographs I was hampered by the fact that a public footpath ran along one side of the field, and, being anxious not to betray the nest to passers-by, I had to set to work in the early hours of the morning. Consequently the camera could not be left in position for any length of time, and the problem was not only how to obtain a picture, but how to

do so with the least possible delay. Now the nest in the bracken betrayed to me by the female, as already described, seemed advisable for my purpose. There were two isolated gorse bushes within 12 yds. of it, and I focussed the likeliest perch on one of these, and attached my thread to the shutter and the other end to a post in the fence some 15 yds. on the further side of the nest. I then made a sudden descent on the latter, from which the hen bird fluttered out in alarm, and, without a pause, hastened to the end of my line. Wonderful to relate—considering how very seldom anything comes off in bird-photography as one has planned—I was not a second too soon, for, as I turned to look, there was the cock stonechat "chacking" away on the identical stem commanded by my camera. But, alas! even as I pulled the line he was off. I had set my shutter quite slow, to ensure against under-exposure, and the misgivings with which I afterwards developed the plate proved only too well founded. I repeated the experiment the next two mornings, but on each occasion the sentinel posted himself a foot or two out of range in the most tantalising manner. Then the young birds left the nest, and my chance seemed to have been lost. A day or two later, however, having located the retreat of the young brood at the far end of the field, I found the parents more demonstrative than ever, and so reluctant to leave the spot that I selected the largest gorse bush and adopted the same tactics as before. Though not achieving my object, I gained the important information that both birds had a decided preference for perching on a certain dead bush; returning on the morrow, I lost no time in acting on this hint. The success of this last attempt was almost startling, for in less than twenty minutes I had secured three photographs; the negatives proved that I had done well in again tempting providence with a slow shutter, in view of a light mist that came up inconveniently.

Photographs of the young birds in the nest did not turn out satisfactorily, and I tried to get a picture by placing a newly-fledged youngster on the top of a bush, but each time I released him he was off like quick-silver, wriggling down and disappearing into the thick herbage with astonishing quickness. The young birds bear little resemblance in plumage to either parent, being mottled more or less all over; but their upright poise and the constant movement of the tail are too characteristic to be mistaken.

I have never observed that the hen creeps away some distance from the nest before taking flight, as has been stated. It may be so when she joins her mate of her own accord; but on the many occasions when I have revisited a nest she has always flown straight from it after receiving full warning of my approach.

I have known a stonechat and a linnet to inhabit nests within a foot of each other, both being unusually close sitters. In conclusion, I may add that the stonechat may well be placed among the birds which appear to pair for life. A. H. M. Cox.

## JACKS-O'-THE-CLOCK.

JACKS-O'-THE-CLOCK were at one time not uncommon, but few have survived. Among the survivals are two in the neighbourhood of Southwold, one of them being in the Church of St. Edmund, in the parish and borough of Southwold, the other in the church dedicated to the Holy Trinity, Blythburgh, about five miles from the former borough. Blythburgh is beautifully situated on the river Blyth, and is now quite a small, unimportant village, though formerly holding a more important position in the county of Suffolk. Ecclesiastical courts and sessions were held there, and

the gaol for the division of Beccles was within its precincts. It is now noted only for its nobly-proportioned church.

Both Southwold and Blythburgh churches are of the Perpendicular style of architecture (1390-1547), the former being finished c. 1460, succeeding an older building, which was destroyed by fire c. 1420; the latter was completed c. 1473.

Whether these "automata," known as Jacks-o'-the-clock, were synchronous with the introduction of clocks into England (thirteenth century), is uncertain, but that the two effigies referred to are of considerable antiquity is unquestionable, and they are,



A. E. Cox.

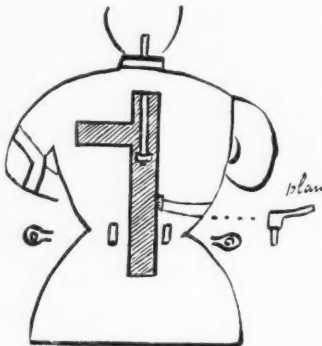
QUARTER JACKS IN NORWICH CATHEDRAL.

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doubtless, of the same date as the churches in which they occupy so prominent a position. The effigies being clad in plate armour of the period is a proof that (medieval antiquaries being non-existent) their construction was no later than the completion of the churches which are their abiding-places.

The Southwold Jack is a figure 3ft. 11in. in height, well-proportioned, carved in oak, and painted to represent a man-at-arms vested in a breast-piece and back-plate, jointed at each side, and protected beneath the waist by "taces," a series of narrow, over-lapping plates, which in a suit of armour were attached to a lining of leather: "Chaussons," and "Chausses," armour for the thigh and leg below the knee respectively. Greaves, or jambarts, consisting of laminated plates, are continued over the feet. And what is most distinctive of the armour of the period, and fixes the date of the figures most conclusively, is the shape of the covering for the feet—"sollerets," as they were termed in armourers' jargon. These are pointed at the toes; in the sixteenth century they were square in form. The head-piece, surmounting a well-cut, clean-shaven face, is a light, open one, known as the "bascinet." In his left hand Jack bears a sword, which he carries transversely across his body; his right grasps a battle-axe, which strikes a bell attached to an iron support by his side. The armour is that worn during the civil wars of the rival houses of York and Lancaster. There is nothing, however, to indicate to which party Jack belonged; but he was probably of the Yorkist faction, as the badge of that



PLAN OF THE BACK OF JACK.

party, the white rose - en - soleil, is carved on the stonework of the south porch and north doors of the church.

He executes his present duty, that of announcing to the congregation the commencement of the service, by means of a cord passing through the back of his right arm, which, when pulled by a member of the choir, raises the axe, when, the tension being relaxed, it descends sharply upon the bell, thus performing the act of tintinnabulation. He stands upon a slab of plaster, in an easy attitude, with the right leg advanced, similar to the modern military position known as "standing at ease." His



F. Jenkins. BLYTHBURGH JACK. Copyright.

head is made of a separate piece of oak, revolving upon an iron pin inserted through a hole bored in the trunk, which works in a socket. It was set fast by a wedge about the middle of the last century, to overcome a slight oscillation which had taken place when the bell was struck. This was found necessary by the incumbent and churchwardens of the time, to allay the fears of the superstitious and nervous, and to prevent the untimely laughter of those whose "lungs" were "tickled o' the sere."

Jack's labours are considerably lighter than in the days that are past, being now confined to Sundays. In former times, being connected with the clock, he struck the hours mechanically and automatically on Sundays and weekdays alike. Some, however, are of opinion that he struck the bell at the canonical hours only; but the former seems the more probable theory.

Jack has in his time been somewhat of a nomad. He was originally stationed in the Tower, under the west arch, where he probably stood for ages. Gardner in his "History of Dunwich, Blythburgh, and Southwold," published in 1754, thus refers to him, viz.: "Over the rails, in the arch of the Tower facing the chancel, is a Jack in complete armour (as old as the church) holding a hammer, with which he strikes a little bell hanging by him to notify the hour to the congregation at the commencement of Divine Service." Prior to the enlargement of the gallery he was removed (April 2nd, 1825) to the chancel, where he occupied the place now filled with the organ-screen, and upon the erection of the organ in 1882 his final migration took place, to the niche at the top of the "vyse," or stairway leading from the north chapel (dedicated to the Holy Trinity) to the rood-loft.

The accompanying drawing shows that Jack's duties were, originally, not confined to striking the bell with his axe, but that his head and the axe moved simultaneously. Having made a careful examination of the figure, I obtained the permission of the churchwardens to have the necessary lever, spring, and cord affixed, and on Sunday, July 10th, 1904, he again welcomed the congregation—after the lapse, perhaps, of centuries—with a cheerful though weird wagging of his head, only to be discontinued the following week for the same reasons as already mentioned. It is to be hoped that the succeeding generation will be less neurotic, and able to witness the evolution with more fortitude.

Two well-known references to Jack-o'-the-clock occur in Shakespeare. Richard II., in the pathetic soliloquy in the dungeon of Pomfret Castle, alludes to him in the following passage:

"For now hath time made me his numbring clock:  
My thoughts are minutes, and, with sighs, they jar  
Their watches to mine eyes, the outward watch,  
Whereto my finger, like a dial's point,  
Is pointing still, in cleansing them from tears.  
Now, sir, the sound, that tells what hour it is,  
Are clamorous groans, that strike upon my heart,  
Which is the bell: So sighs, and tears, and groans,  
Show minutes, times, and hours,—but my time  
Runs posting on in Bolingbroke's proud joy,  
While I stand fooling here, his Jack-o'-the-clock."—*Act I., Sc. I.*

In "Richard III.," in the final scene between Richard and Buckingham:

"Buck. My lord—  
K. Rich. Ay, what's o'clock?  
Buck. I am thus bold to put your grace in mind of what you promised me.  
K. Rich. Well, but what is't o'clock?  
Buck. Upon the stroke of ten.  
K. Rich. Well, let it strike.  
Buck. Why, let it strike?  
K. Rich. Because that, like a Jack, thou keep'st the stroke  
Betwixt thy begging and my mediation.  
I am not in the giving vein to-day."

—*Act IV., Sc. II.*

And the perhaps less-known instance in "Timon of Athens," where, at the banquet, Timon rails at "the friends of



F. Jenkins. SOUTHWOLD JACK. Copyright.



his fortunes not himself" in the following terms :

"Live loath'd, and long,  
Most smiling, smooth, detested parasites,  
Courteous destroyers, affable wolves, meek bears,  
You fools of fortune, trencher-friends, time flies.  
Cap-and-knee slaves, vapours, and minute-jacks!"  
—*Act III., Sc. VI.*

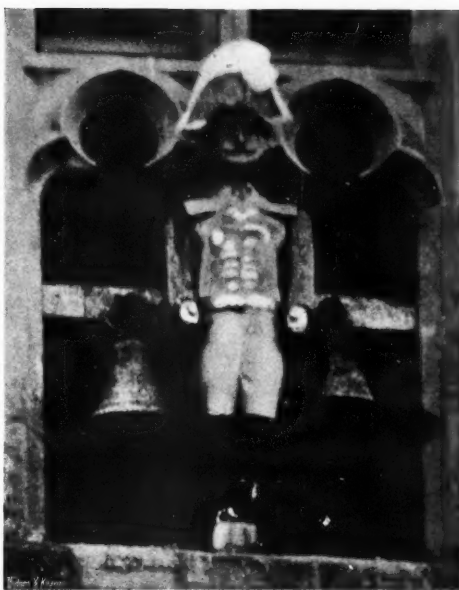
Nares, in his glossary, thinks that "Jacks" mean "fellows who watch the proper minute to offer their adulation." The reference is to Jack-o'-the-clock watching for the moment when he had to perform the office of striking the bell to announce the passing hour.

A forgotten dramatist, Edward Sharpman, in a comedy called "The Fleire," has the following phrase :

"Their tongues are like a Jack-o'-the-clock still in labour."

I have taken up so much space with the description of the Southwold Jack that his brother-in-arms at Blythburgh must be dismissed more briefly ; but much that has been said of the former applies to him equally. He is a much smaller figure, not so well proportioned or executed, and of meaner appearance, which is that of a bearded old man broken down in the service of the wars. He gives one the idea more of a seneschal or warden of a castle. Like his neighbour, the Southwold Jack, he has had migratory instincts. Originally attached to the clock at the west end of the church, about thirty years since he was lying dismembered in the vestry ; taken to Walberswick Vicarage, where he suffered the indignity of being painted in the crudest colours by a son of the vicar. When the church was restored (1882-84) he was placed in a wooden niche, or rather canopy, over the vestry, where he now stands. Some years ago a brass dinner-bell was screwed into his right hand, where it remained some time, until a more suitable instrument was provided. Both the effigies have well sustained the "unimaginable touch of time."

DONALD R. GOODING.



F. G. O. Stewart.

QUARTER JACK AT WIMBORNE.

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support the rude growth these quick-growing plants make in one season. It is the practice of the writer at this time to clear up the borders. The stems of plants that have been left for their winter colouring are removed, and the strongest of them reserved as stakes for the summer. Economy must be the rule in the garden, and the best use made of even what, in luxurious houses, is regarded as rubbish. Thinnings of hedge-rows are sometimes serviceable as stakes for Peas and Beans, and should be prepared for this purpose. Watch the plants carefully in the border for the purpose of restraining those of too vigorous growth in their desire to overrun weaker neighbours. A hungry perennial Sunflower would soon run riot and monopolise the border, and travel occasionally from one spot to another, robbing the soil of its goodness and killing flowers quite as beautiful and interesting. Begonia seed may be sown now in a brisk heat, such as is afforded by a hotbed. It is very small, so much so that it is better to mix it with fine sand and sow it in this way ; it is then more likely to be evenly distributed. A bed of tuberous Begonias is a brilliant picture for many weeks, and the seed can be purchased in packets, with the assurance that the colours will be reproduced. A few years ago florists had not attained that perfection in seed-raising, and the practice of propagation by cuttings or corms had to be resorted to to reproduce a certain flower true to its colouring. Before January is over it is well to make up the seed-lists for the spring sowing, and give the orders at once.

#### RANDOM NOTES.

*Examine the Trees.*—A January duty in the garden is to go round the shrubbery and examine old ties and stakes, to ascertain whether they are hurtful to the trees. This is often neglected, and brings many disasters in its train. The writer has lately examined several trees which were suffering

from the ties cutting into swelling growths, and making the way easy for numerous diseases. It is well to thoroughly examine supports to the trees and affix new ones where the old are decayed, and occasionally a specimen that has been thought sturdy enough to stand alone may require assistance. It is by attention to details that a garden is made beautiful.

*Carnations and Pinks in the Flower Garden.*—Although Pinks and Carnations are welcome in so many forms of gardening, perhaps their greatest use, other than in wall and rockwork, is as edgings and under-plantings to Roses, or something of taller stature than their

own. By "edgings" is not meant straight or stiff borderings only, though the white Pink and its kinds are among the best plants for this use, but informal fillings of the outer portions of beds and borders. Used like this with Roses they are admirable, each kind of plant enhancing the beauty of the other. They are, perhaps, least suited for filling up whole beds, unless the beds are quite small, and especially narrow in form.

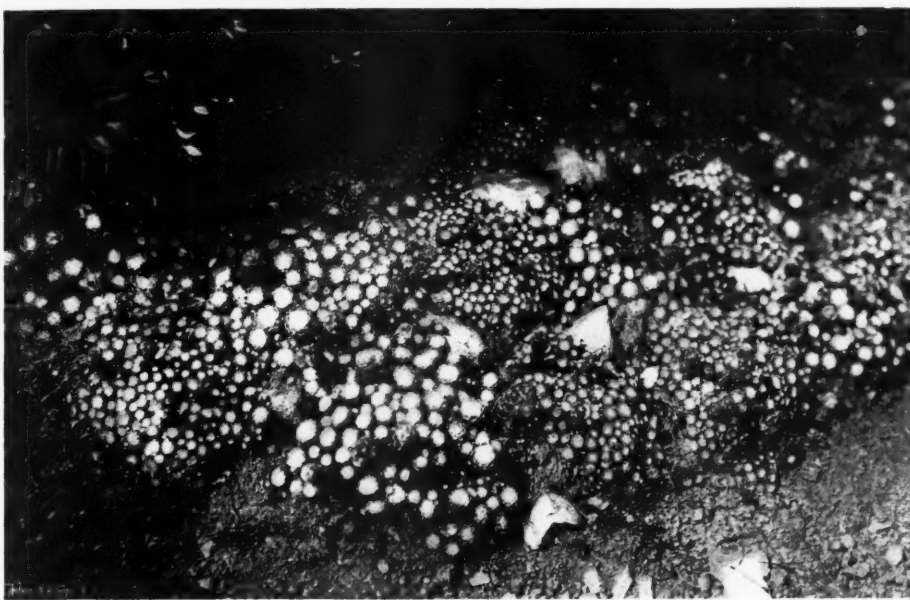
## IN THE GARDEN.

### THE HOUSE-LEEK.

THE illustration is interesting as showing a quaint clustering of the Cobweb House-leek, which is known in books as *Sempervivum arachnoideum*, the pretty silvery cobweb-like hairs suggesting the English name. We have seen better effects from the use of this House-leek than shown, as the little tufts are placed in a way

that does not often a certain lumpiness, which is not pretty. We prefer to plant the House-leeks in the rock garden, here and there, not in a colony by themselves, unrelieved by neighbouring plants ; but this is, of course, a matter of choice. The devoted lover of the House-leek will rejoice in a House-leek garden, and when a right choice is made, the variety of colourings and shapes the various sorts present is astonishing. The common House-leek (*S. tectorum*) is a well-known naturalised plant, frequently to be seen enjoying a position on a cottage roof, or a similar position so hot and exposed that one would think vegetable life impossible ; but this is only

evidence of the extraordinary vitality of the family, with their fleshy leaves to give sustenance. The hardy House-leeks are most at home in very poor soil, the one essential to success being dryness at the root. On the rock garden where the soil is sandy and well drained, on old walls, and as a margin to a border, the various sorts are very useful, and the wall-gardener will find many a niche for the finer species to bring variety to his



THE COBWEB HOUSE-LEEK.



IN the pleasant district of West Surrey that lies south of Guildford, standing well away from the high road, is this beautiful relic of the domestic architecture of Tudor days. It is the more remarkable in that the district, though it can show many a fine old timbered cottage, is not one that has many remaining of the more ancient buildings of the same calibre. The adjoining county of Sussex, whose borders are not many miles away, is much richer. Indeed, for many miles around Great Tangley stands alone as a type of its time and kind. Close to it, southward, rise wooded hills leading to the long stretch of wild heath-clad and wooded heights known as the Hurtwood—an ancient forest, and a favourite haunt of smugglers in the days of the Georges. It was in a nearly direct line from the Sussex seaboard to London. Northward is a wide space of level meadow-land, evidently the alluvial flat of an ancient river, of which the Tillingbourne, a modest stream that flows into the Wey not far from Guildford, is now the representative. It waters the valley, working more than one mill on the way, and irrigates some well-known water-cress-beds, as it passes from Shere and Albury. Beyond this, northward, and running east and west, is the broken line of sandstone hills, of which the most salient, St. Martha's, crowned by its ancient church, is a

landmark for all the country round. Again northward, the foot of the sand-hills joins the foot of the parallel ridge of chalk, which runs for many miles to the east and west. This range is cut through by the river Wey on its way to join the Thames, and here is seated the ancient town of Guildford, its picturesque High Street running straight up from the river to a higher point upon the chalk on the way to London and Epsom.

In far-away days it is probable that the whole of the valley, on whose southern edge Great Tangley stands, was filled with marsh and forest; much of it, perhaps, impassable. But the house and its moated enclosure were seated on dry ground at the foot of the sand-hills, and were sufficiently watered by its own stream, which supplied the dwelling and filled the moat, a necessary defence at the time of its building. The fish-pond above supplied some of its needs, and it must always have had good access to Guildford and to the neighbouring villages to the south and south-west.

The place is described in an old chronicle as having been "a homestead in Saxon times." In later days, William the Conqueror gave the manor to Odo, Bishop of Bayeux. It was Crown property till the time of Henry I., when it was granted to a private person. It seems to have returned to the Crown



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THE OLD MANOR AND MULBERRY TREE.

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THE ENTRANCE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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THE WALLED GARDEN.





THE BRIDGE.

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THE WALLED GARDEN.

more than once, till in 1173 King John granted it to John de Fay, whose family held it till 1572, when, for lack of male heirs, it passed successively to the families of Braose, Mowbray, and Howard. Later it was sold to John Caryl, who, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, built the handsome timbered front.

The connection of Tangley with the Howards (Dukes of Norfolk) was of special interest; for the romantic figure of Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey—accomplished gentleman, brave soldier, and one of the first poets of his age; a man who added to his grace of Royal descent the finest qualities and most worthily-prized acquirements of the time in which he lived—would have inherited the place, had he not been beheaded in his father's lifetime. Descendants of the Caryls held Great Tangley till the first half of the last century, when it was sold to Fletcher Norton, Speaker of the House of Commons. After the death of a later Fletcher Norton, Lord Grantley, when all the Grantley property in the neighbourhood was dispersed, Great Tangley Manor was

bought, in 1884, by Mr. Wickham Flower. During Lord Grantley's time the place was used as a farmhouse; the moat was choked with earth and rubbish, and overgrown with brambles and wild brushwood. At one point it had been filled up with a solid causeway, where waggons could pass to the building. Rough orchard and cabbage garden came right up to the house, and the rough roadway was pitted with fowls' dusting holes and the untidy *débris* of their pecking and plumage. Neglect

and disorder were everywhere around, but through it all smiled John Caryl's beautiful timbered front, embowered, but not obscured, by a clambering grape-vine. It is this timbered front, and some portions of the house of earlier Tudor work, that comprise the oldest now remaining of the habitable parts of the building. To the eastward the house was originally larger, but this part was demolished by one of the Nortons. Evidences of the former existence of a great hall remain in the magnificent beam and king-post, now rather awkward impediments in the bedroom



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THE PERGOLA.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE SITE OF THE ANCIENT DRAWBRIDGE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."





THE ENCLOSED GARDEN—SCUTH.

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THE COVERED WAY OVER THE BRIDGE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

above, where the lower line of the beam comes about shoulder high.

As in the case of a number of other houses of the same class and of about the same date, the great hall had its height reduced by half by a bedroom floor being built within it. As civilisation advanced, the need was felt for greater privacy in the way of sleeping accommodation, and it was obtained in this way without adding externally to the size of the house. From a social point of view, such a course can only be applauded, however regrettable it is from the architectural standpoint. Archaeologists say that there must have been a further small gable westward, with a large, high window, such as was usual in the halls of these ancient houses. But this would have been within the part taken down early in the nineteenth century. When Great Tangley came into Mr. Flower's hands, twenty years ago, it was evident that a good deal must be done to fit it for modern occupation. Happily, the architectural work was entrusted to Mr. Philip Webb, whose reverent treatment, as far as the older part of the structure went, was confined to what was strictly necessary. This eminent architect set his face entirely against any renewal that should be in direct imitation of the old work; and when, later, another sitting-room and more bedrooms were required, and he built the library at the eastern end, it was done in such a way that it assumed no effect of competition with the timbered front. It is perfectly in harmony, but gives the

impression of voluntarily effacing itself in order to enhance the value of the older work. Mr. Webb was of opinion that nothing more could possibly be added without serious loss to the character of the building, a conviction that would seem to be amply justified by the effect of some recent additions at the eastern end, finished only three years ago. It provides a large and handsome music-room and some bedrooms, all on the ground floor, and makes Great Tangley a larger and more commodious country house. The work is excellent, that of a younger architect of great ability, and, considering the size of the addition, it is, perhaps, as little obtrusive as possible. But there can be no doubt that it overloads the old house, and takes away much of its charm. The timber bridge and covered way that lead so pleasantly across the moat to the house-front, are a part of Mr. Webb's original work. Near the water-level in the moat, a little to the right of the bridge, is some massive masonry of very large stones, evidently of great antiquity. Other evidences of a solid stone structure of

a time earlier than the Tudor house were also found. Mr. Webb also erected the timber screen on the house side of the moat, in continuation of the fine old stone wall, loop-holed for defence, where a portion of this had been demolished for the cart-road to pass over. This screen, and the remaining portion of the wall, which is of the local Bargate stone, with brick dressings to the loop-holes and doorways, enclose a small garden that has borders of hardy flowers next the wall. The middle space is a plot of grass,

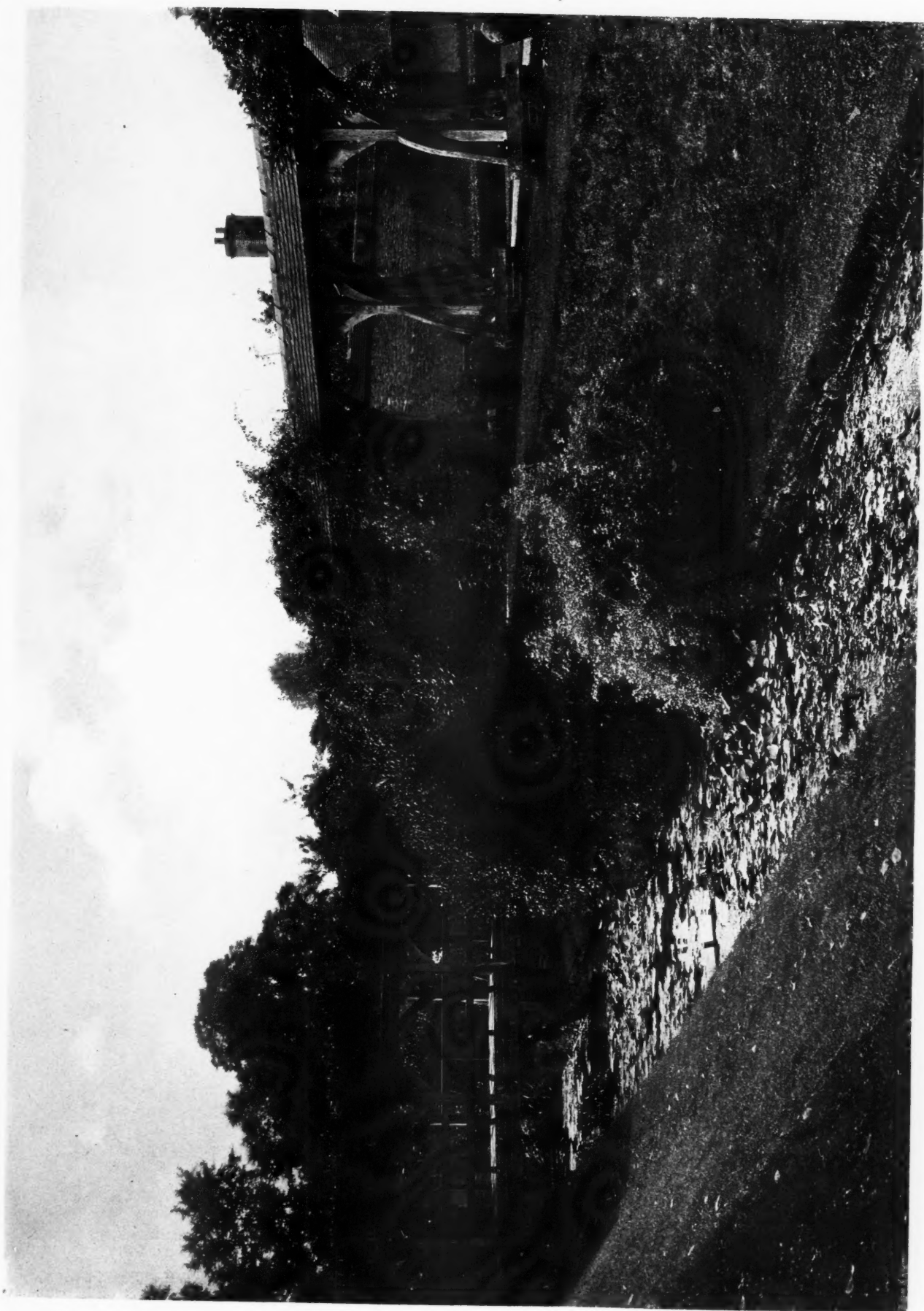


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THE PLEACHED WALK.

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THE MOAT—SOUTH-EAST SIDE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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THE MANOR FROM THE EAST.

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THE EMPTY SEAT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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TO THE FISH-POND.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

with a flourishing mulberry tree in its midmost space.

Many hundreds of loads of earth and mud were taken out of the choked-up moat. All that came out was carefully examined, and various records of ancient days came to light; among them pottery and glass of the sixteenth and two following centuries, and fragments that may have been of earlier date, with many copper tokens of the time of William IV. and subsequent reigns, and one silver Roman coin. There is also a ball of wood, of which only the outer part is decayed, of a size that makes it probable that it was one of a set of bowls that escaped during a game, rolled down into the moat, and may have been lost for some 300 years. But perhaps the most difficult to account for, of all the objects found, are five large fir-cones in perfect preservation, exactly like the cones of the Italian stone pine. They were found embedded in the mud 8ft. below the surface. Even the thin, easily-detachable lining, of a texture like a fly's wing, that is between the seed and the scale, in the cavities where the seed rested, has remained intact, but the seeds were all gone. There must be something in the soil, probably the iron, with which much of the mud and water of the district is impregnated, that acts as a preservative to these woody structures, for the cones look as if they might be only in their second year, when the scales open and the seeds fall out. Of later relics the most abundant and noticeable was the large quantity, equal in all to the contents of a bushel measure, of the earlier form of tobacco-pipe, with the straight stem and the narrow bowl set on at a much more obtuse angle than those of later date.

The garden, that was formed at the same time as the excavation of the moat, occupies several acres around the house, the greater part of it being on the eastern side and outside the moat. The long-shaped pond that supplies the moat is also in this direction. Passing to the right from the entrance at the bridge, without going over the bridge, and skirting the bank of the moat, which is now on the left-hand side, with the timber screen across it, there is a pleached alley of limes overhead. Towards the end of this there is the sound of rushing water where it falls from the higher pond level. Near here, in excavating the moat, were found some ancient penstocks for regulating the flow of the water. The banks of the moat are here planted with the great water saxifrage (*S. peltata*), the fine plant growing luxuriantly and showing its full size. The path next passes under a pergola of vines, roses, clematis, and other climbing plants. About midway in its length the pergola has a projection, also covered with growing greenery, with seats at the sides, leading to a landing-board set out into the pond. The path beyond the pergola has a double flower border full of good hardy flowers; the pond-edge is included, and shows a remarkable growth of the water-loving iris (*I. lævigata*), and the allied species known as *sibirica* and *orientalis*. These have crossed spontaneously, and have enriched the pond-edge with numbers of beautiful seedlings of intermediate character. The kitchen gardens and plant-houses are to the right, and a capital rock garden in the form of one simple dell covered with rock-loving plants in large masses. This massing

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of plants was practised from the very first, and is even more noticeable on the further side of the pond. This is reached by passing round the end by a picturesque old pollard oak, where the look-out is to the north-east, across the meadow levels to St. Martha's Hill. The return journey on the northern side of the pond is still more interesting to the flower-lover. Informal

The garden was made under the happiest conditions. Labour and material unstinted, owners of fine taste who knew what they wanted, and with the willing help of the best of gardeners, who, in addition to a thorough knowledge of all branches of his business, put his whole heart into the work, and so achieved not only its successful issue, but added



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IN THE BEAM ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

paths pass between low banks of heaths of a few of the best kinds, such as the Irish heath (*Menziesia polifolia*), and the Cornish heath (*Erica vagans*). Beyond, are groups of azaleas, kalmias, bamboos, spiræas, and others of the fine plants that revel in peat and moisture. Everywhere is evidence of the refined taste in horticulture that makes good use of the best of plants.

greatly to the owners' interest during the progress of its making. Indeed, in these few words about the garden at Great Tangley, it is only right to put on record the name of Mr. Whiteman, not gardener only, but also his employers' faithful and valued friend.

The house was gradually filled with such furniture of bygone days as was most suitable. The owners well knew how to do it. Every piece looked as if it might always have been there.

In the new library, built by Mr. Webb, there could be rather more latitude. It was a room well fitted for the pleasure of peaceful study, delightful and restful, and a fitting place for its precious store of rare and beautiful books and other treasures of fine art.

Alas, that death should have brought dispersal; that the treasures of many years' collecting should now be finding new owners; that bookshelves should yawn empty and rooms be

dismantled. The great bedstead, with the sculptured Evangelists to guard the sleeper, is no longer there. One thinks, will any new comers honour the place as did the old?

It is a passing phase in the old place's history; let us take comfort, at least, in knowing that the work of the past twenty years, so carefully and wisely done, has saved it for the happiness and reverent admiration of those still in life and of those yet to come.

## A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

It will not, even at a first glance, be taken at the present moment as absurd that Shakespeare's *Tempest* should be commented on as a book of the week, since a recent revival of this play has re-directed public attention to it, while the issue of a new edition by Messrs. Blackie and Son affords a fair pretext for what is more of a *causerie* than a set review. Apart from the merits of any particular revival, the conclusion forces itself upon us that, as time goes on, Shakespeare ever becomes less fitted to the stage, while he never loses his charm in the closet. One obvious cause of this is that his language is growing old. We no longer talk in the style of the Elizabethans. The human mind, in fact, is ever groping after direct, clear, and forcible expression. In order to achieve that end, it abbreviates not only phrases, but words, and it invents slang that often puts a world of ceremonious periods into a single word. Let anyone consider the opening conversations that take place between Miranda and Prospero. Would a daughter and a father of to-day address one another thus:

"Miranda. Wherefore did they not  
That hour destroy us?  
Prospero. Well demanded, wench;  
My tale provokes that question?"

To the ordinary mind it is like reading in patois, and the further we get away from a time the less direct to us is the appeal of its language. We may say "to us" with emphasis, because one of the most marked characteristics of the age in which we live is its tendency to discard the superfluous; to put away the pomps and ceremonies that were so dear, for instance, to our forefathers of the eighteenth century; to lay aside formalities of speech, and to go straight to the point with a "Yes, Dad," and a "No, Dad." But, of course, this is external and trivial. The great and real difficulty lies in the fact that in this play the mind of the poet set before us one of the most beautiful visions which literature has embodied. The island is a world in miniature. Over it Prospero rules with the wisdom that a great king might learn in eld. Miranda is the very embodiment of woman. In portraying her and the delicate Ariel, Shakespeare essayed as difficult and as beautiful a task as ever the ambition of man carved for itself. Dreamers have dreamed of an additional sense. They have conceived, too, of creatures free from human weaknesses and human passions. Shakespeare in Ariel has embodied such a fancy. We noticed that in the stage representation the part of Ariel was played by a woman; but the spirit is absolutely sexless; and not only sexless but entirely exempt from the ordinary human emotions. Take the beautiful song that is so well known:

"Come unto these yellow sands,  
And then take hands;  
Courtsied when you have and kiss'd  
The wild waves whist,  
Foot it feathery here and there;  
And, sweet sprites, the burthen bear."

It is the invitation of such phantoms as might have played careless and invisible when Dido "stood on the wild sea banks and waved her love to Carthage." And Shakespeare, as his manner is, having once conceived this characteristic of his sprite, proceeds to emphasise it by turning the song into a mockery of man's unavailing grief and regret. We call it mockery, but the artistic indifference and the delicate wording of the piece take away even that semblance of a passion. There is neither mockery nor pathos in those beautiful lines:

"Full fathom five thy father lies;  
Of his bones are coral made;  
Those are pearls that were his eyes;  
Nothing of him that doth fade,  
But doth suffer a sea-change  
Into something rich and strange.  
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell."

Thus Ariel is sexless and bereft of human emotion, a thing of air and cloud, the conception of a poet, whose imagination seemed to fashion with equal facility such a slight and exquisite creation as this, and such an incarnation of human thought and trouble as Hamlet. But with his maiden he had an even more difficult

task, for of all things created woman has ever been at once the most natural and the most sophisticated. The typical feminine mind is at bottom very simple. It is in reality moved only by one or two elemental passions, and the conventions, ceremonials, and *finesse* worked over the top of these are the merest embroidery. Shakespeare knew women as no other writer did. He has given us a gallery unparalleled in its charm and constancy and worth, but it is curious how he makes his young girls revert to the primitive. Even Juliet, the wisest, as she was the most beautiful of all the Shakespearian women, takes the facts of life and states them with a force and an intensity that would make the dowagers of to-day blush. With Miranda, however, he had to picture an ideal girl left entirely to the guidance of her own instincts. The twopenny-halfpenny conventions, or even the so-called moralities that guided the life of women in civilised society, had not been taught her. She is as fresh and unsullied as the dawning sun, and when she speaks there is something of the purity of the morning air in her very words. But with all that, instinct and passion are strong, and she flings herself at the head of her lover in a manner that to the over-civilised woman of to-day would appear unmaidenly. Yet it is Shakespeare's triumph that he lets his Miranda say what she pleases, and yet increases at every step the love and admiration felt for her. Perhaps the weakness, or it might be more just to say the less strong point, of the play is that the masculine element is not so well developed as the feminine, and the lover of Miranda is but a lay figure. The rest of the *dramatis personae* are touched in with the evident intention of producing a microcosmos, an island in which in miniature we can see all this world and its inhabitants. There is the very spirit of evil embodied in the repulsive Caliban, and yet even he is not inhuman. What a love of Nature is disclosed in that speech to Stephano:

"I prithee, let me bring thee where the crabs grow;  
And I with my long nails will dig thee pig-nuts;  
Show thee a jay's nest and instruct thee how  
To snare the nimble marmoset; I'll bring thee  
To clustering filberts, and sometimes I'll get thee  
Young scamels from the rock."

In the other characters, worldliness, ambition, enmity, friendliness, drunken and brutish forgetfulness, all play their parts as they do in real life, and about this legend, as it is being enacted, are strange mysterious sounds, wonderful and inexplicable emanations from the infinite, which surely are not without parallel even in this humdrum world around us, where even to the heart-sick and weary there come at times strange flashes speaking of mystery beyond any human explanation. If there were no others, there are always those which solemnised men like Carlyle and Goethe—"stars silent over us, graves under us silent." And the magician who has had all this at his disposal even himself grows weary at the end, and in the most beautiful epilogue ever written to a drama of any kind declares:

"Now I want  
Spirits to enforce, art to enchant,  
And my ending is despair,  
Unless I be relieved by prayer,  
Which pierces so that it assaults  
Mercy itself and frees all faults.  
As you from crimes would pardon'd be,  
Let your indulgence set me free."

It were indeed an idle task to reproach those who have not succeeded in giving material form to those vivid and brilliant conceptions, and it were an easy task to jibe and jeer at them because of their spirits flying at the end of a piece of string, their mechanical stage thunder, their sudden eruption and vanishing of goblins and ghosts, their carpentry work, and their misplaced engineering. All these are of so little avail in touching the things of the spirit that it is not worth while to dwell on them. In reality it would take a great poet to organise anything like an adequate representation of "The Tempest," and poets of no mean order to fill all the various parts. We do not for one moment suppose that bards are so plentiful as to be available for this task, and the cynic would certainly add his rejoinder, that if there were, the takings are not likely to be great, since the fit, as it happens, are so very, very few.



## THE KINDLY FRUITS OF THE EARTH.

LOOKING at the very beautiful illustrations that accompany this article, the simple and convincing words from our Church service occurred forcibly to my mind. The increase of the earth is ours; we cannot sum up our blessings or rightly estimate our gifts. It is only when there is a season of scarcity, and these royal guerdons are in part withheld, that we understand what we have lost. Then we grumble and repine; but we are not punished for our ingratitude, for once again the circle of blessing becomes perfect, and our orchards are golden with fruit and our fields white with corn. These fruits of the earth are, indeed, kindly, and they are all beautiful in form and colour, and a true lover of Nature sees in the humblest products of his vegetable garden endless subjects for the artist. None need be rejected, for they are all part of a wonderful picture painted by a master's hand. What can be more beautiful than an apple bough, whether wreathed by the shell-like pink and white blossoms, or, as in the study before us, crowned with the triumph of its ripened fruit? The sturdy stem, rough and grey, ribbed and scored, strong enough

the study before us how delicately the half-lights are treated, the graduated tones of the vine leaves, the faithful sharpness of outline, without harshness or crudity, the carefully-considered value of the cool reflections from the glass dish on the warm tones of the apples, and, last but not least, the soft subservience of the background to the richness and wealth of his subject. The treatment of transparent objects is evidently this artist's speciality, for in the study of ripe gooseberries you can see the juice beneath the surface of the tender skins.

And now, departing a little from the artistic to the practical, and stepping from the dining-room to the kitchen, we find a basket of goodly Stirling Castle apples. These are no playthings, but a well-ried fruit, prize-winners in the exhibition tent, and unrivalled on the housekeeper's table. To gather together our fruits of the earth we have wandered from orchard to hothouse, and now we must find our way to the kitchen garden. Would we had a prettier name for such delightful places as these gardens of English and Scottish country houses! But, simple as the old name is, it suggests great charm. Grey, time-honoured walls,



J. M. Whitehead.

A FRUIT STUDY.

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to have and to hold the large and beautifully-formed golden globes, the embryo buds of another autumn's promise already formed beneath each softly-tinted leaf—all these details have been so perfectly rendered that, in this picture of the Golden Noble apples, the colours are not missed. Can you not fancy you see the parent tree standing in the orchard, with laden boughs stencilled against the pale November sky, the mellow fragrance of a hundred fruits possessing the moist autumnal air? The Golden Noble is a fine, old-fashioned, late apple, which need never have been put aside, as it has been, for inferior varieties. I think the spray of Louise Bonne de Jersey pears was taken from a sunny wall. Pears have not the insistence of the apple, and droop languidly from frailer stems. Their shining yellow leaves fall over the perfectly-shaped green and yellow fruit that a declining sun has sprinkled lightly with russet and red. There was once a painter of fruit whom the world has almost forgotten. His name was Lance, and he loved such groups as the artist has here given us; it would have been a subject worthy of his facile brush and colour-gift. A hothouse pine, luscious and sweet, an idyll in gold and orange. The vine foliage, of emerald tints varied by sun-touches of purple, red, and yellow, and the delicate amber of the translucent Muscat of Alexandria grapes. Note in

where May Duke cherries blush plentifully beneath their luxuriant leaves, and where, later, peaches and pears may be plucked for the asking. Warm corners where ancestral fig trees yield their unstinted honey-sweet fruit. Beds of strawberries, crimson and fragrant; borders of pinks; and old-fashioned roses for my lady's pot-pourri; and creeper-clad pergolas, beneath whose shade stately lilies bloom; herb-beds, where bees are always busy. And here, too, are beds of carrots, and rows of green and silver leeks for the hereafter of colder days, and white-globed turnips, cauliflowers like heaps of driven snow in their enshrouding leaves, and fern-like parsley for the insatiable chef. And from this collection our artist has given us another charming little photograph of still life. But what I think the prettiest of all combinations of flowers of the field and fruits of the earth still remains—just a spray or two of honesty and half-a-dozen apples in a dish of Venetian glass.

What a dear, quaint thing is honesty!—the satin-flower of the old herbalists. Indeed, it may well be called by both names, for when the ripe seed-vessels are stripped of their outer covering, and the three flat, brown seeds expelled, they are, as Gerard says, "Thin and cleere, shining like a piece of white satin newly cut." Each little satin disc is finely outlined, as though with the point of

*J. M. Whitehead.*

## FOR THE KITCHEN.

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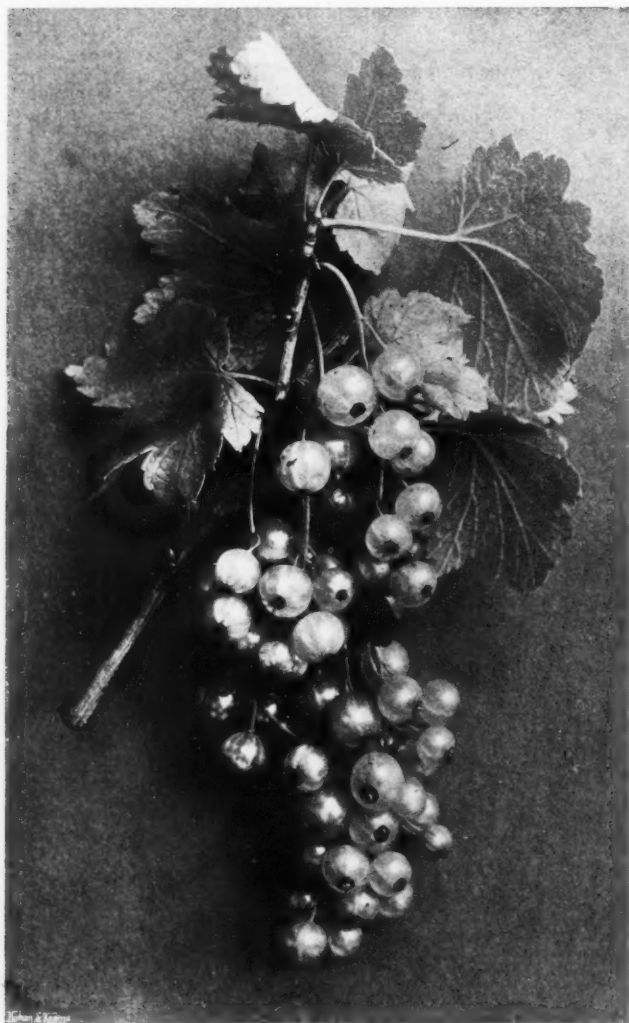
an etching-pen, and this makes the sprays very adaptable to artistic composition. Honesty and apples and Venetian glass are well arranged together, for apples are essentially an honest fruit, and pretend to no more virtues than we shall find in them, and, moreover, there is a singular likeness between the transparency and tone of the Nature-made plant and the delicate opaline glass manufactured by the hand of man; and so the trio is a perfect one, as all trios should be.

And now we are on the subject of honesty, I will ask your patience for a few seconds longer, and revert to my title, "The Kindly Fruits of the Earth." We ask for these "in due season that we may enjoy them." If we are to enjoy them we must use them honestly and worthily; we should, as far as we can, preserve these good things for our use—that is to say, we must not waste all those chemical products which, if these fruits are properly prepared as food, will help us to retain our health and

strength and lengthen our lives. There is a very simple means by which we can do this: We must insist on our vegetables

*E. Seymour. LOUISE BONNE OF JERSEY.*

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*E. Seymour. A BUNCH OF CURRANTS.*

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being steamed, instead of all their most valuable constituents being boiled out of them, and thrown away in the water, while a useless mass of vegetable refuse is served up and placed before us. In the pool of green water in which the spinach is boiled, in the evil-smelling cabbage water, the curse of the kitchen, are all the good things we ought to preserve for our use. And when God gives us our vegetables and fruits in due season, I firmly believe that season, and none other, is the right time for their consumption, and that we should not interfere with His laws by eating acid fruits in cold weather, or by forcing vegetables which ought to be brought to perfection in strong sunshine and fresh air, and by this natural preparation secreting juices fitted for our needs. By eating forced fruits and vegetables we forestall our pleasures and discount our inheritance, and we shall not enjoy the kindly fruits of the earth in due season.

Besides all which, it is a safe general principle to lay down that the open air is better than the hothouse. Take life all round, from the ascidian up to Hamlet, as a distinguished critic is in the habit of saying in his lighter moments, there is no living thing that is not finer in its natural surroundings than in a forced



and artificial state. The men and women of the town, dressed in fine array, and fed with savoury meats cunningly concocted by French or Italian artists, have not the vigour and energy and wholesomeness of those who take their pleasure and find their work in the open air, who are at home not in the crowded function and busy street, but on the windy hillside, the ploughed field, and the covert. England was a far better England in days long gone by, when the great Wen, as Cobbett called London, had not yet begun to grow into the enormity it is now; when cottages and houses, and castles and towers, of which scarcely a ruin remains, smiled on our valleys and steepes; when, in a word, the country was still far more agricultural than industrial. Men could work better then, and we are afraid they could fight better also, for the effeminateness of modern life must give rise to many misgivings.

AUGUSTA DE LACY LACY.

## FROM THE FARMS.

### THE ROYAL SHOW.

THE voting at the meeting of the Royal Agricultural Society showed that opinion was greatly divided as to the advisability of holding a show this year at Park Royal. The proposition was, however, carried by a majority of twenty to sixteen, and we have no doubt that the objectors will now loyally combine to help to make a success of the exhibition. The reasons for their hesitation are quite comprehensible. They assert with truth that the business is a very costly one, and the guarantees already provided are not sufficient to ensure that there shall be no loss. We quite understand their position, but, on the other hand, all who are interested in agriculture will be heartily glad that the show is to be held once more. It is the greatest thing of its kind in the world, and it would be a thousand pities to drop it.

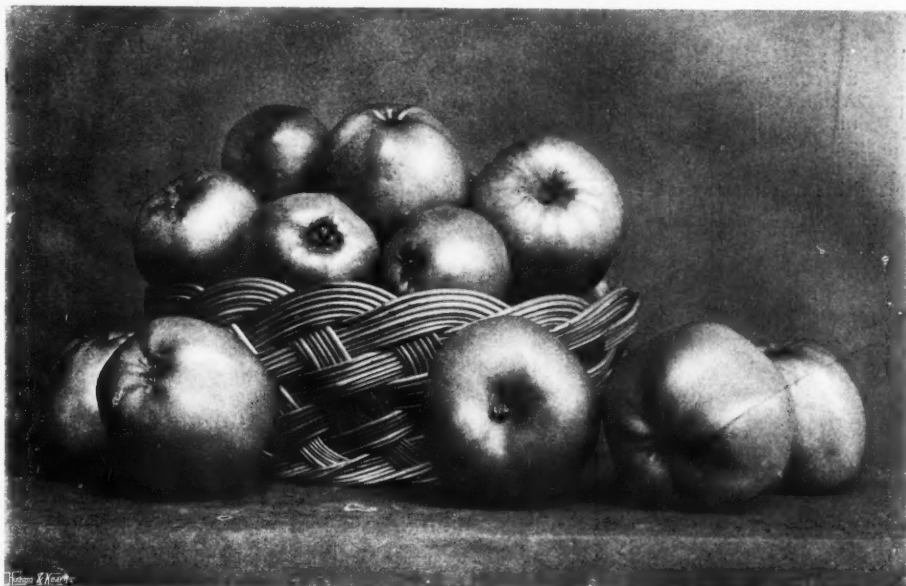
### CANALS IN AGRICULTURE.

We are very glad to see that a contemporary has been directing attention to the possibly greater utilisation of canals for the conveyance of agricultural produce, seeds, and manure. The objection generally made to the conveyance of commercial stuff, that a canal is not sufficiently swift, does not apply to agriculture—at least, in this country. A day or two days would scarcely affect wheat, for instance, as it seldom happens that cereals have to be rushed to market, and there is no reason whatever why

rapidity should be insisted upon in the carriage of such articles as artificial manures, grass and other seeds, and the things ordinarily needed on a farm. They might be conveyed in a leisurely fashion, and still no one be put to any inconvenience, while at the same time the general expenses are reduced.

### THE CONSTRUCTION OF PIGSTIES.

The Board of Agriculture has not produced a more useful pamphlet than that which is devoted to this subject. Swine fever is one of the curses of the country, and there is no doubt of its being spread more easily owing to what the writer of the



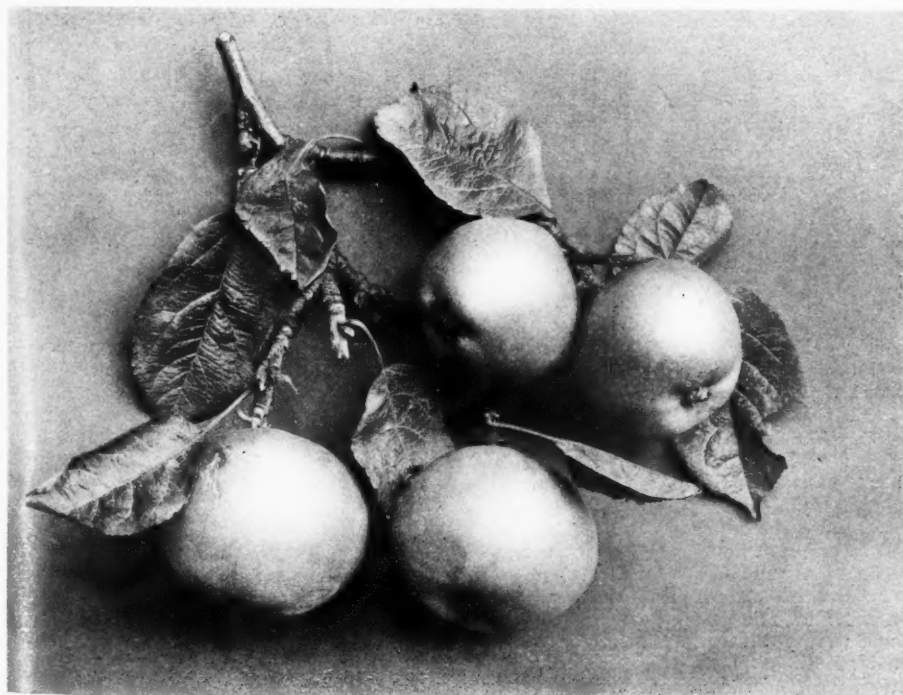
E. Seymour.

STIRLING CASTLE APPLES.

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paper calls "the foul, badly-built sty, which in bad weather becomes a quagmire, and harbours the germs of disease, that too often spread through the neighbourhood and cannot be suppressed for years." Yet even when this extreme case is omitted, it is certain that many pig-houses are ill-constructed, and swine kept in them do not thrive so well as those that are housed in a proper and wholesome manner. The writer divides pig-owners into classes. First, we have those who live in urban centres where ground is valuable. Here it is useless to build an expensive sty, as the land is at any time liable to be purchased for building or other purposes. In country places land is plentiful, but building material is often scarce and difficult to get. On conditions such as these must depend the class of sty that is built. "If the pig-owner lives in a dairying county, a wheat-growing district, or a potato-growing centre, he must modify his plans

to suit the wants and customs of such a neighbourhood." The points to be observed are pretty much as follows: A good sty will have the largest amount possible of sunlight, fresh air, and dry footing. In the sty itself the most important part is the floor. It should be made of some hard substance to prevent rooting, and the best material is concrete or Portland cement, though a useful flooring may also be made with a mixture of tar and gravel, stamped and rammed into a sort of block, though in this case care should be taken not to let it be too long exposed to the sun's rays, lest the tar melt and make the whole surface soft. Bricks have the disadvantage of being liable to chip and crack, and stone flags allow the manure to slip in between the joints, so that the soil becomes impure. Wooden floors are perhaps the worst of all. A good workman ought to be able to make an excellent concrete floor himself. It should be laid with a gentle slope towards the front of the sty, and the top of the outer court should be lower than the bottom of the inner court by about 2in. The object of all this, of course, is to secure dryness under-foot. The next point of importance is the walls. We are



E. Seymour.

A SPRAY OF GOLDEN NOBLE.

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not quite sure that the writer is correct in condemning those of wood, because they have the great merit of cheapness, and, after all, nothing purifies so well as fire, and after a time the sty can be burnt down, and at small cost a new one built on a different part of the farm. Of the roof it is necessary to observe that it should be raised well above the wall of the inner court, so as to secure plenty of fresh

air for the animal. The material out of which it is made is of no great consequence, provided the wet and the cold are kept out. Very great importance must, of course, be attached to the drainage. Into this question, however, we have gone pretty fully on a previous occasion. If the principles observed are carried out, they will apply to a single sty, and a large piggery need not be any more than a number of sties.

## IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

**I**N a remote hamlet by the sea there once dwelt an honest fisherman, who had in his household a daughter named Anne and a youth of her own age, which was about nineteen, who was the orphan of the victim of an October gale. The house was kept by the fisherman's wife, a well-conditioned matron still on the less comfortable side of fifty. The fishermen had the name, generally speaking, of being a

the long, sensitive, bowed lips, which, though capable of a rare and charming smile, seldom broke into laughter. "Mother," he said to the good woman of the house, "I would like to stay with you, and here is my luggage," holding up a small bag, "and here are my tools," displaying a palette and brushes. The good woman, though her only room was vacant, did not like to give it up on so direct a summons, and began to parley; but he



M. Emil Frechon.

### REMINISCENCES.

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thrifless folk, whose money came with the fife and went with the drum. They fed themselves well, and had every little luxury they could think of while it lasted; and then came the lean and barren days when they had to fend as best they could; but the woman of the house we allude to was rather better than her class, and had a wonderful reputation for making her home pleasant and comfortable. It caused her to resort to many devices, and among them was that of occasionally taking in a lodger. The hamlet, whose name is not given, lest it should be immediately overrun with tourists, has not yet become a summer resort; but wanderers from the cities occasionally found their way to it, and if they wished to stay, there was no chance of doing so except at the fishermen's huts. Now one day there arrived at the cottage door a youth of twenty-three or twenty-four summers, a being such as is not produced at the seaside. His eyes, though capable of a luminous tenderness, had, even when he was at rest, something wild and careless in their glance. Indeed, the gaiety of his appearance would have been too much accentuated, but for the gravity expressed by

daughter, who had as yet said nothing, whispered, "Let him bide," and so the artist was installed in the cottage. His acquaintance with the sea had hitherto only been a distant one, but soon he learned the charm of intimacy. The cottage was so close to the water that, to illustrate the circumstance by a homely fact, the women used to throw their refuse into it when the tide was up; and though this struck him as curious on his arrival, he did not realise what it meant till he had slept there a night. Then he began to understand the wizardry that is in the song of the sea. Many a time he lay awake in the moonlight and listened when no other sound was audible except the crooning that the wavelets make as they rise and curl and fall on a low and sloping beach. And at times the sea-birds came, and, hovering over the cottage, gave forth their wild strange cries so suggestive of breakers and foam, a wild, rocky coast, and islets raising their foam-circled black heads out at sea. Now, this would have been all very well, for the visitor was an artist and a poet; but somehow he came to connect the girl of the house with the magical song that





FULL RIGGED.

M. Emil Frischon.

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the sea sang to him; and, indeed, he well might, for, though only a humble fisher-girl, she, like Aphrodite, might have risen from the sea. She was not a beautiful young woman, but her eyes were those of a dog for faithfulness, and, though she had been little at school, her mouth had the same curling, long lips that were so noticeable in him, and that bespoke a poetic nature, whatever her upbringing had been. Indeed, she looked as much a part of the scene as did the kittiwakes and sea-swallows that screamed round her dwelling. Her hair was the colour of dead leaves when an October sun shines on them, and she had an old cloak very much the same in hue; while her natural taste had induced her to acquire garments that, though poor in quality, harmonised in colour with these salient points in her appearance. And, when doing nothing else, she was for ever crawling and climbing about the rocks, more like a wild animal or a boy than any girl, and when the rain came and she was seen perched on some outstanding pillar, it required no great effort of imagination to believe that she was only a beautiful brown bird ready at a moment's notice to open

And the reflection cast a kind of gloom over her whole being. She imagined her father and his companions taking their pleasure round the table of the small public-house. She pictured the gross and dangerous labour that was their fate in working hours, and she felt like the sparrow which in the old Saxon tale looked for a moment from the blackness of an outside world into the brilliantly-lighted feasting chamber, but had to depart again into the darkness. With these feelings surging between them, it is no wonder that, although they never spoke, they developed certain signs which the simplest could read. We need not here enumerate them, or dwell on her sighs and tears and the look of gloom and anxiety that came into his face. But, heedless of their wish to hold them, the hours, that never stay their pace for mortal needs, slipped noiselessly past, mourned by these two, but going too slow for the young man who had been adopted into the family. It was a crucial moment, and he watched with jealous vigilance the behaviour of the artist and the girl. But what happened he never knew. A more imaginative writer might set down what occurred, because he could divine it; but



M. Emil Frechon.

## "WHO SHALL PAY THE LAWING?"

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its wide wings and depart over the boundless ocean. And, indeed, she figured herself in his mind as something of the kind. It was not true that he believed her capable of any such prodigious feat as flying, but every time that the express train came drifting over the landscape, with its smoky flag waving, he remembered that in a few short days it would be carrying him beyond sight or sound of her. On her side there was a feeling almost equally woeful. To her simple mind he had appeared with something of the glamour of a lovely apparition. His gaiety, his gladness, the light in his eyes, the smile that played about his mouth, were such as she never met with among the stolid fisher-lads of her acquaintance. She thought, too, of that hour of parting which had loomed before her since the first meeting had taken place, and she felt a sadness such as had never come to her before in thinking that this bright and beauteous form would at an early day be withdrawn from her sight, and that henceforth she must again face the hard realities of life—realities that to her meant gathering mussels when the tide was back, baiting the lines of the men-folk, and carrying a creel of fish on her broad shoulders.

the matter-of-fact scribe whose fate it has been to chronicle these happenings only knows a few facts. One of them was that when the express train carried the young painter away his eyes were fixed mournfully on the ground. He left his palette on the table and his pictures on the wall, nor did he ever come again to demand them. As to the girl, all that she said was, "Mother, I'll work myself to death for you if you'll promise never to take another lodger." She has been married this long while to her foster-brother, and they say she is happy and contented; but at times a far-away look comes over her face, and she dreams of the things that might have been.

Nothing was ever known by the fisher-folk about the young man, but the parson of the parish and the attorney had much conversation, which did not go further than the study of the former. The two were old cronies, and when the Academy Exhibition opened, and they saw that a certain beginner with the brush had done a portrait which sent all the critics in England into ecstasies, they were glad of an excuse for a visit to London, went up to look at the picture, and first they were taken with the suggestion of rock and foam



in its setting, and then they saw that it had been entitled "The Little Brown Bird," and finally realised that, lo and behold, it was the fishing-girl from their own village, and there was much wagging of grey heads over this discovery.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### FIRE BRIGADES IN COUNTRY MANSIONS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The appalling fires that have occurred in country houses during the past year should be a lesson to all country residents, and show them the need of a good fire brigade amongst their servants. We know very well that any house of importance has its own fire brigade and escapes, but the laxity shown by servants to thoroughly understand the working of the apparatus is deplorable. A gentleman may have the best and latest appliances in existence, but that alone is no security against fire. To be a successful brigade, there must be organisation amongst the servants, from the butler downwards, the coachman and his helpers, the gardener and his men. Now, when a firm erect a fire-extinguishing plant in a house, they usually contract for a man to come every three months to see that it is all right, and to put the servants through their drill. That is all very well; but once in three months is not often enough, and when the fireman is coming it is oftentimes looked upon more as a spree than anything else, and just something to break the monotony of country life. And even then it is only the younger servants that do anything, for the butler would dirty his clothes, and the housekeeper cannot be bothered; which shows the necessity for the master himself taking an interest in the working of it as well, and there is not the least doubt but that the servants would take a great more interest in it if the master was there, and they would look upon it more as a duty than play. And, again, a fire generally happens in the night, and, as a rule, servants are a good distance from the front of the house, where the master and mistress generally sleep; so that a master, should a fire happen, by understanding the apparatus himself, would very likely be the means of saving his house from destruction, while, if he did not understand it, he would have to fetch a servant who did, and while finding that servant in all probability the flames would have got a good hold, and the place be nearly gutted. Now, if a master will have a drill, say, every fortnight, be there himself, and have all his men with him, he will find they will do their drill as quick as possible and to the best of their ability. Of course, most families go to town for the season, and the house is shut up, or most of it, and most of the servants are gone, too; but then the gardeners are always there, and they could drill the same, with the head-gardener to direct operations; and when the master is there, if he rings the fire-bell himself, unknown to any of the servants, he will soon find out the fruits of his labours, and if the bell is placed in a position where it can be heard by everyone, there is no excuse for them if they are not on the spot when it rings. Practice makes perfect in everything, and as a fire destroys thousands of pounds' worth of valuables, it is surely much better to take an interest yourself, and keep your household in a state of efficiency, than to have the home of your ancestors burnt down. With a hose on every landing, canvas shoots near the windows, whereby the maids can escape, and everything kept in working order, it is quite possible we shall hear less of the disastrous fires and loss of life we have been so accustomed to of late.—J. C.

### PRINT AND ENGRAVING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Can you tell me the technical difference between a print and an engraving? I heard two men discussing a third party, evidently all interested in prints, and one said of the third party, "Why! he does not know the difference between a print and an engraving." I have asked two or three collecting friends if they could give me this information, but they do not seem over-clear about it. Can you tell me?—E. H.

[If our correspondent will refer to his COUNTRY LIFE for September 9th, 1899, he will find that Mr. Alfred Whitman answered his question in the following words: "The word print practically covers every kind of image or impression made upon paper from a metal plate, wood block, lithographic stone, or process block, taken by means of the printing press. The word engraving is more generally understood to signify the printed impression taken direct from a steel or copper plate that has been engraved. The two words, therefore, are not quite synonymous, for the former has the wide application."—ED.]

### THE BREAKING OF DOGS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It appears that some remarks of mine, which were made on the occasion of a recent visit of your photographer to this place, have given offence to Sir Henry Smith. It was not, however, my intention to lay down any hard-and-fast rules for the guidance of others as to the means which they should adopt in breaking their own dogs. After all, this is entirely a matter of *chacun à son goût*. In these days, when so many people are smitten with *furor scribendi*, it does not come as a surprise to me that others should take exception to any remarks of mine which appear in print. But it appears that the courtesy of olden days is fast falling into disrepute when we read some of the fiery attacks which are made every week in the correspondence columns of some of our leading sporting papers. More particularly is this remarkable when we consider that such letters are usually the outcome of one sportsman's views with regard to the opinions of one of his *confrères*. Now, it may have been the intention of Sir Henry Smith, when writing his "challenge" last week, to try and entice me into a friendly controversy on canine matters, or he may have desired me to answer it somewhat in the same spirit as his own letter appears to have been written. But, in his own words to me, "from either point of view he is equally in error," since, if the former was intended, the wording of his

letter was slightly ill-chosen, and if the latter was required, then his own letter, and some of its statements, present opportunities of my doing so, as in the opinion of myself, and others who have read them, they are likely to be somewhat misleading. Personally, I have the strongest objection to discussing any controversy in print. But, in justice to myself, it should be pointed out that I never said it was impossible to cure a gun-shy puppy. I referred to dogs, and had the word "confirmed" been prefixed to "gun-shy," it would have given a better idea of my real meaning. And here, at least, we both appear to be in accord. Concerning the advisability of breaking a gun-shy puppy, it is a case of *tot homines, tot sententiae*, as to whether or no the game is worth the candle. My own opinion regarding my own case, where I have a number of good dogs to break, is that it is not worth spending much time on bad ones. Therefore, the next time I am unfortunate enough to possess a gun-shy dog I shall have much pleasure in presenting it to anyone who cares to take the trouble of curing it, and then breaking it. This offer always holds good when I have any dog with a vice, more particularly if it happens to be a hereditary one, as I never keep a bad dog, neither will I sell one, but will give them away to anyone who will accept them, *faute de mieux*, although I could often get good prices for what are, in my estimation, bad dogs. One of my reasons for doing so is, that in most cases if we breed from any dogs which show bad failings, or vices, a great percentage of their progeny will often develop similar failings. This is not my opinion only, but is known to be a fact by many other breeders of dogs, and the importance of it was long ago impressed on me by one who taught me all I know concerning dogs, he himself having learnt it after a life's experience as a master of hounds, and an owner of what is to-day one of the largest kennels of sporting dogs in England. Sir Henry Smith does not consider gun-shyness to be hereditary, but I have seen cases where it has been so. Another and equally important reason why I am opposed to breaking such a dog for my own use is the following one. To exemplify it I cannot do better than quote extracts from Sir Henry Smith's letter: "Dogs differ, like men, enormously in temperament." "The animal which fears the discharge of a gun is simply a timid dog." Now we have known cases where men have been "simply timid," or, in other words, have lacked real pluck. We have seen such men trained in the most scientific manner, by the best of instructors, in the noble art of self-defence, but when they have been pitted in the ring against men of inferior scientific knowledge, but of better pluck, we have often seen the latter win. Give the two men equal training, and there is no comparison between them. Such is also the case with timid dogs. Where it is possible to break a nervous dog of gun-shyness, such a dog will almost invariably lack the drive, dash, and perseverance of a real well-plucked one. And, moreover, all the teaching in the world will never infuse real pluck into the heart of man or dog, and without this necessary attribute the biped or the quadruped is at the best an inferior article. As regards the old-fashioned method of breaking a hard-mouthed dog with a stuffed rabbit skin, I can only say that there is to-day in my possession a dog which was presented to me and which I cured of that vice as stated. This dog was worthy of some trouble, since he was endowed with many other good qualities and came from a good working strain. I am prepared to exhibit this dog any day as regards his capabilities of retrieving softly and yet with a "firm grasp." He shall compete against any other dog known by Sir Henry Smith which was a *bonâ fide* hard-mouthed dog, and which has been broken of the vice by any other method; the trial to be held at wounded ground game and any kinds of running winged game, including ducks and snipe in the water. I will even go further, and, in return for a small wager, will give my opponent, the dog's owner, a decent day's shooting where he can get these various kinds of game, if he likes to come here and attempt to convince me that his method is the best. A leading judge of the English Field Trials, who has seen this dog work, is ready to act as one judge in the contest. In conclusion, let me add, lest any of your readers may say this effusion contains *satis eloquentie, sapientie parum*, that I far prefer to discuss such matters privately with a fellow-sportsman rather than by writing columns in the papers.—C. E. RADCLIFFE, Hyde, Wrexham.

### POULTRY-FARMING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have read with much interest the article entitled "Experience of Poultry-farming" in your issue of December 24th. It would be interesting if one or two points in the article and balance-sheet could be explained, as I think it would be of assistance to those of your readers who, like myself, tired of the old-fashioned way of keeping the common "broaddoor" fowl, are anxious to adopt the most up-to-date methods of poultry-farming on business lines. The first point on which I should like to beg for further information is the £300 expended on food. This works out at slightly over 3s. per head, ducks and geese included. Is not this an excessive figure in view of the fact that rather more than half were killed off when from twelve to fourteen weeks old? Taking their food at an average price of £6 per ton, this would mean a total of 50 tons of food, or  $\frac{1}{2}$  cwt. each. Possibly there was a large quantity of grain in hand at the end of the year, which has been accidentally omitted from "stock." The sum of £50 expended in eggs for incubation appears to be a very large sum. Did the authoress not use any of her own eggs, and is there any reason against doing so? The price £21 10s. for sixteen foster-mothers is surprisingly low. Would it be too much to ask upon what pattern they were made, and were they satisfactory? As this would greatly reduce the capital expenditure. The writer of the article paid £54 10s. for incubators, fowl-houses, etc., exclusive of paint, tar, and whitewash. At the end of the year she writes the whole of this down to £20, this figure also including any food or petroleum left in stock. Was not this unnecessarily low, and the profits greatly reduced thereby? There appears to be an entire absence of wire-netting on this farm. I have read Mr. W. B. Tegetmeier's remarks on the article, and while I am aware that some have lost money in this industry, I know of several who, starting in a small way, and on lines similar to those of the authoress, now appear to have worked up thriving businesses. I would venture to say that almost every country gentleman is, to some extent, a poultry-farmer. I am sure many, like myself, would hail with satisfaction

further articles on the subject in your columns from those who have had practical experience of modern methods of raising poultry, and who have found it remunerative. Such articles would greatly encourage this rural industry, and those who, like Mr. Tegetmeier, have failed to make it pay, would gain valuable information.—C. M.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Perhaps you might think my poultry account for 1904 of interest to some of your readers, as it shows that a small profit may be made from keeping a few fowls. My stock consists of seventeen white Leghorn hens and a cock, and they are kept on half an acre of grass land. I might add that all my cockerels were sold at 2s. 6d. each.

	£	s.	d.
Receipts ... ..	9	12	8
Payments ... ..	7	19	10½
Cash profit ... ..	1	12	9½
Eggs used in house and set, 1,008 @ 1d. ... ..	4	4	0
Total profit ... ..	£5	16	9½

—A POULTRY-KEEPER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—If it be of interest to recount my experience of poultry-keeping, I beg to say that the birds kept by me are, for laying purposes, black Minorcas and white Leghorns. I have bought a pen of white Leghorns for trial, as they are supposed to be very good for winter layers. With reference to these breeds, I have found the black Minorcas are far and away the most prolific layers, the eggs being the largest and of the finest flavour. The fact of the eggs of the black Minorcas being white is considered a drawback by ignorant persons; but this, of course, is utterly absurd, as the colour of the shell is nothing whatever to do with the flavour of the egg, which depends entirely on the feeding of the bird. Next to the black Minorcas, I find the white Leghorns are the best for laying, especially in the winter, being a hardier bird, but the eggs are somewhat smaller than those of the black Minorcas. The breeds that I am using for table purposes are the following: Buff Orpingtons, Sussex, and Dorkings. The best of these, I find, is the buff Orpington (they are also good layers). I am going to try to improve on these by crossing the buff Orpingtons and Sussex with Indian game and Malay cocks. I am only just commencing poultry-farming on systematic plans, so my stock is only averaging about 300 birds; but I hope this season to increase to 1,000 or more. I feed my poultry, both laying and table pens, as follows: In the morning I give them barley-meat, sharps, and ground oats, the whole mixed with water so as to produce a crumbly substance, not too wet, and served cold. In the afternoon they get a mixed corn, composed of wheat, barley, buckwheat, maize (cracked), and peas mixed in equal proportions. As regards hatching, I use Heason's 100-egg incubators, and have always found they work very satisfactorily. I have tried different makes of foster-mothers, but found Heason's the best for outdoor work. My incubators have been going now since November, and I expect to have about 1,000 chickens ready for the table in March. My plan is to shut them up in the fattening-house at about ten to twelve weeks' old; there they remain for a fortnight or three weeks, coming out ready for killing. The birds I have sold lately have weighed on



an average 7lb. to 9lb. each, for which I have received 3s. 6d. each. Last summer for my larger fowls I realised 5s. each in the London market; they weighed from 12lb. to 14lb. each. Up to now I have only kept Aylesbury ducks, which have paid me well, but I intend this season to go in for Indian runners, which are the most prolific layers. Another advantage is the fact that they are great foragers, consequently only require one meal a day, and, at a pinch, they can do with very little water. With proper management they will generally lay all through the winter, when eggs are dear. I intend

shortly to breed turkeys. I will let you know later on how I succeed. The principle of successful poultry-farming is regular feeding and cleanliness.—F. J. MAITLAND.

#### A LITTLE GREBE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The accompanying photograph was taken by Mr. T. A. Metcalfe, and I think it may prove of interest to those of your readers who are bird-lovers.



The retiring habits of the little grebe are such that it is very difficult to observe its habits, especially as it generally frequents rivers and meres surrounded by a dense growth of reeds and rushes, and, unlike its cousin, the great-crested grebe, is seldom seen in the open water. For this reason, too, many people suppose it to be a much rarer bird than it really is. It is by no means uncommon on the Norfolk Broads, and is well worthy of observation.—F. G.

#### BIRD-BOXES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Your correspondent Admiral J. O. Hopkins should carefully observe the habits of the birds which frequent the neighbourhood, and place his boxes as nearly as possible to the positions the birds naturally choose. There is no aspect which is absolutely tabooed by most of the birds that use these conveniences, but a southern outlook is generally preferred. One thing that is important is that the box is absolutely steady.—F. B.

#### THE HEDGEHOG.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I wonder if you would consider the enclosed photograph of the hedgehog (*Erinaceus Europæus*) sufficiently interesting to be accorded a corner in COUNTRY LIFE. This little animal is generally known as simply a more or less inert ball of prickly spines, but, as a matter of fact, its habits and itself are by no means devoid of interest. In the stillness of a summer evening, when the dusky night is falling, queer noiseless shapes come out from their hiding-places and flit across the path; amongst them, if one sits very still and motionless, may come the hedgehog, with bristles all erect for the fray, and it is by no means improbable that one may see a battle royal between him and a small blind-worm or snake, which is quickly despatched by a succession of sharp bites, a deed scarcely to be expected from a member of the genus *Insectivora*; added to which he has been convicted on the most irrefragable testimony of being a confirmed egg eater, while much worse crimes are laid to his charge by gamekeepers. It is very seldom that the natural cry of the hedgehog is heard, so rarely that few people would recognise it, and, perhaps, on that account the wailing moan of the hedgehog came to be associated with dire portents and strange events. An allusion to this will be found in the greetings exchanged between the three witches in *Macbeth*—"First Witch: Thrice the brinded cat hath mewed. Second Witch: Thrice, and once the hedge-pig whined. Third Witch: Harper cries, 'Tis time, 'tis time'" In many parts of the "North Countree" there is still a strong conviction that the flesh of the hedgehog is a certain cure for whooping cough; and its fat is esteemed as a sovereign remedy against rheumatism. Its skin is often used by dog-breakers to prevent their young retrievers from becoming hard mouthed. In spite of its shyness and low development of brain, the little animal is easily tamed, and becomes quite attached to its owner.—T. B.